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THE ROMANIAN PHILOKALIA

- VOLUME XI -

"The Christendom is the religion assuring the eternal life of the human persons created by a loving Father of a beloved Son, in order to extend His love as Father to the human persons too. This eternal life is provided to each human person through the union with Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of the eternal Father, made man for this non-confounded union of His with us. This salvation for eternity of the human persons is done, on one hand, through the embodiment of the Son of God as man for eternity, and on the other hand through the sacrifice brought by Him and through His resurrection by getting the man, with the man's will, out of the man's passions which lock the man egotistically within himself, and within the seen and perishable world, and through the union with Christ resurrected to the eternal life. This elevation of the man from his passionate, egotistical state, and the man's loving union with the resurrected Christ it is done through the work of the Holy Ghost. But this, on one hand the man is united increasingly more with Christ and the man is imprinted by the Holy Ghost, and on the other hand the man increasingly accomplished his humanity, a humanity bearing within the thirst for the living communion and for the ternal life in the infinite horizon of the loving supreme or godlike life existing from ever within the Holy Trinity." (*Introduction*)

Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru, The Romanian Philokalia, volume XI, Apologeticum.

PHILOKALIA

OR COLLECTION FROM THE WRITINGS OF THE HOLY FATHERS WHICH SHOWS HOW THE MAN CAN BE CLEANED, ENLIGHTENED AND BECOME PERFECT

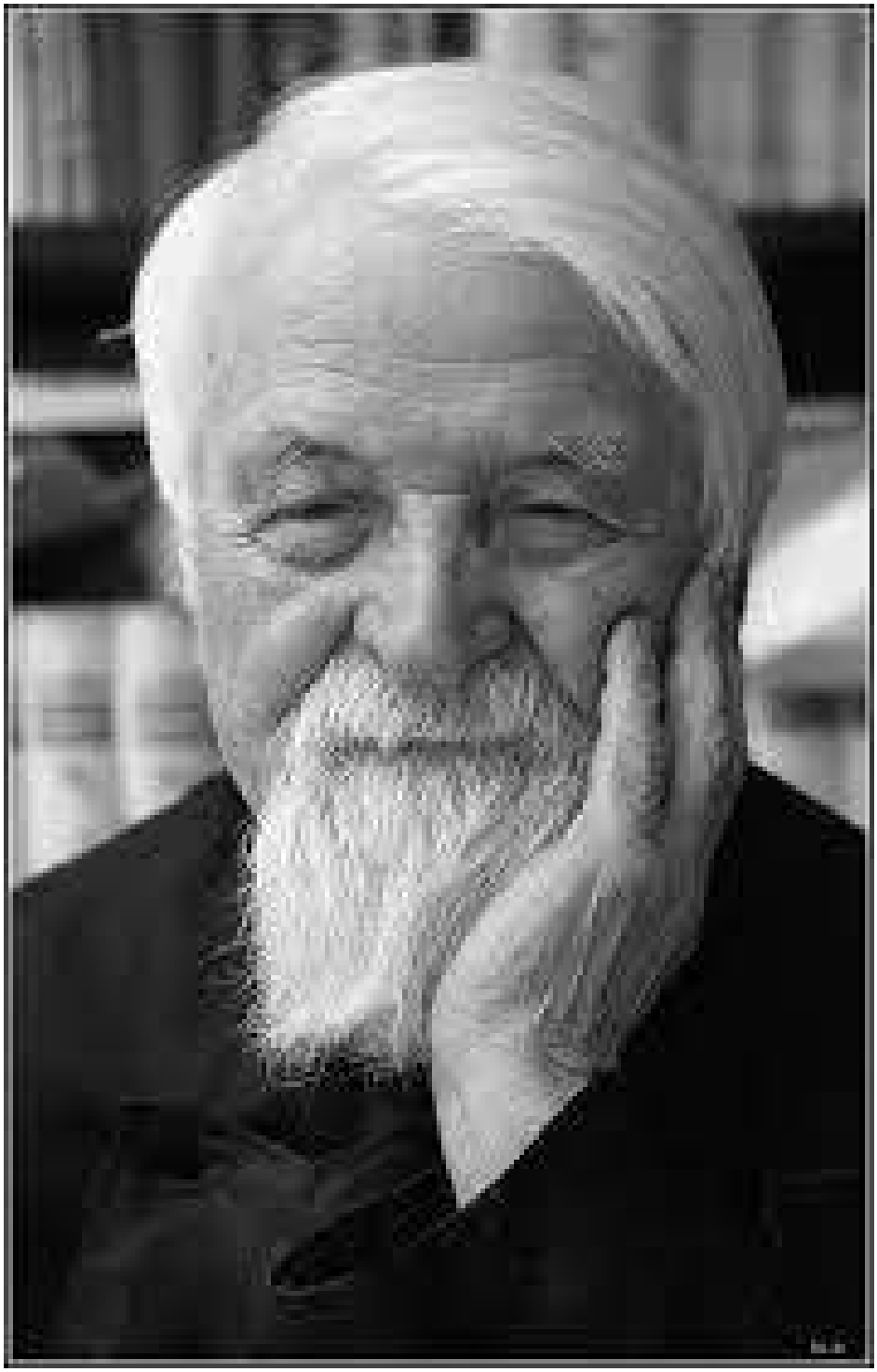
VOLUME XI

TRANSLATION[1], INTRODUCTION AND FOOTNOTES BY

DUMITRU STĂNILOAE

[1] **The texts of *The Romanian Philokalia* were translated from the Greek language in the Romanian language and put together by Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae**.

Translated from the Romanian language in the English language, by the will of God, by the most worthless from men: E.l.t. (Translated between 12. 13. 2024 – 02. 18. 2025).



Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae

Saints Barsanuphius and John

Spiritual Letters

Translation, introductions, and notes by
Fr. Prof. PhD Dumitru Stăniloae[2]

Apologeticum
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[2] Meaning that Fr. Prof. PhD Dumitru Stăniloae translated the original texts from Greek to Romanian. This English translation has been done by the most worthless among men: E. t. l. (between 07. 21. 2024 -

Introduction

1. Content of the Writing

The Christendom is the religion assuring the eternal life of the human persons created by a loving Father of a beloved Son, in order to extend His love as Father to the human persons too. This eternal life is provided to each human person through the union with Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of the eternal Father, made man for this non-confounded union of His with us. This salvation for eternity of the human persons is done, on one hand, through the embodiment of the Son of God as man for eternity, and on the other hand through the sacrifice brought by Him and through His resurrection by getting the man, with the man's will, out of the man's passions which lock the man egotistically within himself, and within the seen and perishable world, and through the union with Christ resurrected to the eternal life. This elevation of the man from his passionate, egotistical state, and the man's loving union with the resurrected Christ it is done through the work of the Holy Ghost. But this, on one hand the man is united increasingly more with Christ and the man is imprinted by the Holy Ghost, and on the other hand the man increasingly accomplished his humanity, a humanity bearing within the thirst for the living communion and for the ternal life in the infinite horizon of the loving supreme or godlike life existing from ever within the Holy Trinity.

Thus, the Christian faith sees a foundation of the salvation what God into Trinity has done through creation and through Jesus Christ as embodied Son of the Father, namely the doctrine on the Holy Trinity and the Christology. In Christology we also have the fulfillment or the target of our salvation as eternal union with Christ and the consummation of our humanity through that union with the Son of God Who has taken upon Himself our humanity and He has brought our humanity to consummation. Christ helps us in this, by Himself working with us through His Holy Ghost. But this also implied a pneumatology, and also a certain conception on man, namely about the man's powers and destination, or an anthropology.

The doctrine on the Holy Trinity, the Christology, and the pneumatology, are united in the savior work with the anthropology.

The New Testament tells us about Christ and about the Holy Ghost separately, namely without Their connection with the man. But neither the man who has entered the way of the salvation is seen outside Chsit and Holy Ghost. Everything from the Epistles of the Apostles present as united the man who is being saved and Christ working within that man through the Holy Ghost, or Christ embodied, crucified, and resurrected as working within us in order to sanctify us through the Holy Ghost. "God hasn't appointed us towards anger, but towards achieving our salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ Who has resurrected for us, in order us to take vigil, either we have fallen asleep with Him, we live together with Him" (1 Thes. 5: 9-10). "Faithful is Him Who calls upon you. He will fulfill too" (he will take you to what He is calling you) (1 Thes. 5: 24).

But the man isn't saved without a collaboration of his with Christ. The man's salvation is but his active union with Christ Who works within man through the holy Ghost. The man's salvation is the man's getting out of the prison of his egotism and the man's entering and growing up into the communion with Christ, accomplished both through Christ into the Holy Ghost and through the man strengthened by Christ. The liberation of the man of egotism it is one with the man's liberation of his passions, or it is one with the man's deification. "For the will of God is this: your sanctification… to know each of you to master his vessel into holiness and honor, and not in the passion of the lust, as do the pagans who do not know God… For God hasn't called us to uncleanness, but to sanctification." (1 Thes. 4: 3-7). But the man can do the efforts towards this cleanness only into Christ, namely coworking with Christ's power and by having Christ as role-model. Therefore, if you have resurrected together with Christ, you will search for the realities from above, where Christ is sitting on the right hand of God… You search for the realities from above and not for the realities from on earth, for you have died and your life is hidden with Christ into God… Therefore, you kill the limbs of the earthly man: the debauchery, the uncleanness, the passions, the evil lust, and the covetousness (Col. 3: 1-5).

Every believer who accepts to work for his salvation he will do this work into Christ, or he will have Christ working within him, to bring him to an ever-greater likeness with Him. This likeness to Christ through the union with Him, it is also a movement of Christ towards an ever-greater union with the

man, but it is also a movement of the man towards this target. Saint Apostle Paul considers that his duty is to present "every consummate man into Christ Jesus" (Col. 1: 28). For "if there is Christ, the man will be a new creature" (2 Cor. 5: 17). "The life of Christ is shown into our mortal body" (2 Cor. 4: 11).

It must be especially highlighted that Christ works within us through His Holy Ghost. His Holy Ghost is our sanctifier power. Christ "has given us the earnest of the Ghost" (2 Cor. 5: 5). The man, in his movement towards the heights of his clean and loving humanity, he reaches to an ever-greater understanding and feeling. And in this it is shown that the man is imprinted within his whole being ever-more with Christ, through the loving and clean warmth maintained within man by the Holy Ghost. The man is like a living paper receiving into it the spiritual traits which the image of Christ is being composed with, as living image. The Ghost mellows the man's heart in order to be able to easily inscribe within man's heart the image of Christ. Thus, the Ghost is like some kind of hot pen imprinting Christ into man.

But the Ghost works upon a man also through another man who has reached, before the first man, to a stronger and more communicative faith. That's why Saint Apostle Paul can say that the believers from Corinth are the letter which he wrote Christ on, with the pen of the Holy Ghost: "Our letter you are, by showing that you are the letter of Christ, served by us, written not with ink but with the Ghost of the living God, not on stone tablets, but on the flesh tablets of the heart" (2 Cor. 3: 2-3).

Behold how the man, by being ever-more united with Christ and by becoming ever-more like Christ, on one hand the man accomplished on himself ever-more like man, like the consummate man who is Christ, and on the other hand the man gets ever-closer to Christ, the role-model man, by impropriating to himself the warmth and the cleanness of the Ghost. The man becomes bearer of Christ and, in the same time, spiritual.

The Holy Fathers following the New Testament, on one hand they persevered in describing the man in the union with Christ through the work of the Holy Ghost, but on the other hand they presented Christ not as separated in His work within man through the Holy Ghost, but in itself His work within man.

The separation of the Holy Trinity and of the work of Christ from their work within man started to be asserted later by the scholastics, by too strictly dividing the theoretical dogmatic theology - which one cannot see how Christ works like, through the Holy Ghost, within man – from the equally theoretical moral theology – which one cannot see in how the man's work is upheld by Christ, through the Holy Ghost, and how the man advances like, through that, into Christ.

It has been said that the Dogmatics has to present us what God is in Himself and what God has done for the man, while the Moral has to present what the man has to do. They overlooked the fact that what the man does he doesn't do by himself but strengthened by Christ and by Christ's Holy Ghost. They overlooked the fact that God is in Himself a God of the love, and this explains the creation and the work of the salvation. They overlooked that everything Christ did before uniting Himself with us, He did it for His love for man and the fact that this work is brought to an end in Christ's union with the man. They overlooked that what Christ did, He did it in the first place in the humanity assumed by Him, and that this work continues within each man individually. They overlooked the fact that the purpose of God-in-Trinity is the savior work within man through Christ into the Holy Ghost. And this purpose consists of uniting the man with the Embodied Son of God, and having to that also the collaboration of the man. They also overlooked the fact that we cannot work anything for our salvation without the Holy Trinity working through the sacrificed and resurrected Christ within us. Properly-said, the salvation consists of the penetration and the dwelling of the Holy Trinity, through Christ, within us, in order They to fill up us too with the love that is among the Trinity's Persons. We will reach the target which Christ is taking us to, when we have become transparent to Christ as the embodied, sacrifices, and resurrected Son of God, and that means our deification. And if the salvation consists of us becoming transparent to Christ, as He is within saints, this won't be only a theme of Morals but also of Dogmatics.

Actually, our moral deeds are God's deeds too, and the savior deeds of Christ reach their end or are fructified in the moral deeds of the man. The Dogmatics comprises in itself the non-unfolded Morals, and the Morals comprises the Dogmatics in its unfolding on the way to consummation.

But between our moral deeds which we unite ourselves through, ever-more with God, and God is united ever-more with us, an important role is played by the prayer. By praying we bring thanks to God, we ask Him to work with us, we praise Him for what he has done and for what He is doing within us. But we do that in the cult of the Church. Thats why the theological writings of the Holy Fathers are in the same time also writings of praising of God, those writings being very close to the Church's cult.

Following them, the whole Orthodox cult is full with the teaching about God in what God has done and in what God is doing for man and within man, namely God is presented as unseparated from the man. Thus, it is explained the theological content of the Orthodox cult, but it is also explained thus the emotional, existential living of the theological content within this cult. This stays in connection with the emotional presentation of the dogmas of the faith and with the continual theological foundation of the moral advices given to the man.

Only when the Fathers had to defend a point of the right-teaching about God or about Christ, they developed more the dogmatic side of that teaching. But not even then it missed from this presentation the connection of that point of the dogmatic teaching with the man's salvation, with its consequences for the living required to the man, with the praising and giving of thanks the man gives to God for the way God's work is reflected in the man's spiritual growth and in the man's power that is given him to collaborate with God to his salvation.

But most of the writings of the Holy Fathers have a preponderant spiritual content, namely they do not present God and Christ's savior work as such, but as that work takes place within man, through the Holy Ghost.

One of the most beautiful writings of spiritual character are "The Spiritual Letters" belonging to Barsanuphius and John.

The pundit monk from Mount Athos, Theocritus Dionisiatis, he writes in the "Foreword" to the second edition of the original Greek text of this writing, printed at Volos, by the Printing House belonging to Sot. Shoinas, in the year 1960: "One of the sweetest and most full of Holy Ghost writings, belonging to the Fathers of the holy Church of the East, but in the same time one of the less know writings to the rightly-believer people, it is, without doubt, "The All-Useful Book to the

Soul" of the ones among saints our Fathers Barsanuphius the Great and John also called the Prophet, a book consisting of 836 Answers".

Rightly so, this writing is of a great spiritual sweetness and it is of a special use not only for monks, but also for all the believers of our Church. Itself its title: "All-Useful Book to the Soul", under which the book was published for the first time in Venice, by Nicodemus the Hagiorite, and reprinted with small improvements at Volos in the year 1960 and at Thessaloniki in the year 1974, it mentions this fact. This fact is also repeated when explaining the title, through the words: "Towards the Use of All Rightly-Believer Christians".

Actually, these writings are appropriate answers, at any time, to a multitude of questions asked partially by monks, but also asked by laymen, questions which – as they were asked at that time or as they are similarly asked today – preoccupy any Christian.

But this writing didn't circulate among the believers' circles before the year 1816. Until then, this writing was only in diverse manuscripts, nu monasteries, destined for the use of the monks, thought through the connection the monks had with the lay believers, the content of this writing could have been spread outside monastery as well. Only in the year 1803, Nicodemus the Hagiorite – a monk pundit from Mount Athos – who published numerous spiritual works of the Fathers, he sent to Venice this work too, in order to be published, as given in an old manuscript existing in the library of the Lavra Monastery from the Holy Mountain, as copied by the Monks Anania, Cyprian, and Euthimios, who also paid for the publishing expenses. Nicodemus the Hagiorite endowed the published book with a biography of the Saints Barsanuphius and John, and with an alphabetical index of the content of the "Letters" from the book.

In the more recent times, this book has been arising a vivid interest in Occident as well. The Anglican priest Derwas James Chitty - a great admirer and living of the Eastern spirituality – has prepared the publishing of a critical text in Greek. A first fascicule of the text, containing 124 Letters, it has been published in the Patrologia Orientalis (t. XXXI, fascicule no. 3, Paris, 1967).

The unexpected death of priest Chitty, it impeded him to publish the integral text in Sources Chretienne. The task for

bringing this critical edition to an end, it was taken by Francois Neyt, who presented, in the year 1967, at Luvan, a remarkable doctoral thesis upon "The Letters towards Dorotheos in the Correspondence of Barsanuphius and John of Gaza".

But, by thinking that the integral publication of this work by Neyt was to be late, L. Regnault, together with Philippe Lemaire published a French translation from Greek, at Solesmes Monastery, in the year 1971. By reckoning the Nicodemus's Greek edition as "insufficient" (according to Hausherr, in "Dictionnaire de spiritualité" I, 1262), Regnault and Lemaire resorted also to some manuscripts from the National Library from Paris and from other libraries. The first 223 Letters were translated by them out of Cod. Coislin, Greek, 124, which they said it was the best. B. Outtier corroborated to their translation also the main Georgian manuscripts, some very old ones, Sinai no. 34 and 35, but which contain only 79 Epistles. Two of these, the first one and the 73rd one, it seems they weren't preserved by the Greek text and they were added at the end of the French translation.

L. Regnault declares that he was urged to translate and publish this writing in French by the "considerable influence this writing exercised in the history of the Christian spirituality" (Introduction to translation).

Our translation, though it has been following mainly the Greek text of the edition from Thessaloniki, it has been taking in account also the French translation. Also, we have been following the order of the "Letters" as taken by the French translation from the better Greek manuscripts used by the French translator, and we have placed between parentheses the different number of the "Letters" according to the edition from Volos.

We have reproduced in our translation also the references provided by the French text, between parentheses, to some sentences from Paterikon, comprised in the Grek manuscripts used by the French translator.

Many wrote about the life of Barsanuphius, also called the Old Man and of John, also called as the Prophet. The first to do that was Nicodemus the Hagiorite in the "Introduction" to his edition, which he described in especially their virtues, on the ground of the news about them.

Lately, S. Vailhe wrote about their lives in: Les lettres spirituelles de Jean et de Barsanuphe, edb. In Echos d'Orient, 7

(1903), pp. 268-276; and then in: Saint Barsanuphe, edb. 8 (1905), pp. 14-25, and; Jean le Prophete et Seridos, edb. 154-160. Appreciations upon the two Fathers and upon their teaching formulated also L. Regnault in his Preface wrote to an anthology of 50 Letters belonging to the two Fathers, which were published in the year 1967, bearing the title "Maîtres spirituelle au desert de Gaza".

We are not going to try here to offer the reader a systematic presentation of their lives. This is because anything we know about their lives it is comprised in their letters. We are going to limit us here only to some brief reflections upon the content of their "Letters", according to some of the data regarding their lives.

Barsanuphius and John were two spiritual Fathers, living as great ascetics during the first half of the Century VI, in the monastery founded by Serid and led by him, in the South of Gaza. Barsanuphius died around the year 540, being know also as "The Great Old Man", and John, also known as 'The Prophet" died sometimes earlier, between the year 530 and 535. Serid, the abbot of the monastery, he died fourteen days before John died. Dorotheos, who came to that monastery for he was attracted by the two Fathers, he was disciple to one of them, and he was also the administrator of the infirmary from the monastery, after the death of John he withdrew from the monastery and he totally locked himself up in his monastic cell refusing even to answer any question addressed to him. (In this regard to be seen *The Romanian Philokalia*, volume IX, p. 465). Vailhe reckons that Dorotheos founded his monastery around the year 540. To Dorotheos had been addressed around one hundred of the Letters, buy the two Fathers.

The two monks lived, each on them, locked up in their monastic cells. Serid was the one who brought them the written questions of some monks or of some laymen, and they told Serid what he should wrote as answer to those questions.

Nicodemus the Hagiorite used the witness of Theodore the Studites in discerning between this Barsanuphius and a certain Barsanuphius who were an acephalus heretic, whom Patriarch Sophronius of Jerusalem spoke about. In this sense, he answered a question addressed by Theodore the Studites to Patriarch Tarasios of Constantinople, who presided the Seventh Ecumenical Synod form the year 787. In this answer addressed to Patriarch Tarasios he said that this Barsanuphius, unlike the

heretic mentioned by Sophronius, Egyptian by birth as that one was too, he was totally Orthodox and he was reckoned by the Church as saint. Theodore the Studites, by presenting this witness bore by Patriarch Tarasios, he also says that during his time existed even an icon of Barsanuphius exposed in the great church from Constantinople.

Regarding the content of the "Letters", it is a concrete application of the doctrine that had been crystalized in the Christian spirituality form the centuries before Barsanuphius and John lived, upon passions and virtues. By that, their content was kindred to that of the Paterikon. But, while in Paterikon this doctrine is concretized in gestures, deeds, and short sentences issued by the Fathers, in the "Letters" of Barsanuphius and John that doctrine is concretized in advices given as answers to the questions raised by some people who strived to apply that doctrine in diverse concrete situations of their lives, while fighting all sorts of impediments, of temptations, and of hardships. It is, by that, also an application of the doctrine from the Philokalian writings.

The advices given in these letters have a remarkable not of realism. They take heed at the spiritual level of those who asked the questions. They asked greater things from them who were spiritually advanced, while they asked more modest things from those who were less advanced, according to their measure. That's why, this book can be of a real help not only for monks, but also for the believer laymen, and especially for the priests who are spiritual guides.

"What the Apophthegmata of the Father (Paterikon) allowed us only to intuit in a few fugitive glitters, on rare moments, here it is unfolding in front of our eyes, as a movie showing us in plain daylight the most-hidden aspects of the monks' life, who are following, day by day, their humble effort of ascesis and of prayer, upheld by the advices, by the teachings, and by the encouragement coming from their Father into God. We do not know what to admire more: the advice given to the disciple who repeats ceaselessly the confessions of his helplessness and who ceaselessly asks for the same advice and help, or to admire the patience of the teacher who doesn't get tired of using all his natural and supra-natural gifts in order to lead towards salvation his spiritual sons entrusted to him by the Savior" (L. Regnault, in *Introduction* to the French

translation of the „Lettres", entitles: *Barsanuphe et Jean de Gaza, Correspondence*", Solesmes, 1971).

It is hard to resume faithfully the great richness of so nuanced advices comprised in these "Letters", according to eth great diversity of situations presented by them who asked for those advices.

Barsanuphius and John aim in their advices addressed to them who asked for guidance, in the first place at humbleness, that is the condition of the love for God and for people, as supreme virtue and achievement of the man. Only those who reached at them, only they have been elevated above all passions.

The humbleness is especially opposed by the vain-glory, because the vain-glory locks the man up into the self-preoccupation in an egotistic manner. This vain-glory can take endlessly diverse and subtle forms, which can deceive the man. In order to reach the humbleness, one needs an increasingly subtle attention, an attention which is increasingly more attentive at the own self, aiming to notice the diverse movements of the vain-glory and aiming to clean up from on the real image of the man all the thicker or thinner layers of slag that covers or cunningly crooks more or less visibly, the real self of the man.

The instrument which this slag is scrapped away with, it mainly is the cutting off of the own will, and the obedience to the authority of the spiritual Father, or to the monastery's abbot. This is because the vain-glory, which all the other passions are tied on, it can crook or falsify the man's being until giving to the man the impression that right this crooked, pretending for it is his true being and the will to uphold that form it is his own will. That's why the man just be helped to break up with this will of his.

Throught humbleness, the man reaches to see his own real self, as cleaned of the layer of opacity, of darkness, which have been place over it. On this way, the uncovered self discovers on himself as a clearly dependent on God self, one could say a self that is transparent to God Who, by the meaning He gives to all realities, He brings within man the great light. At this seeing of the luminous greatness of God cannot reach but the one who sees his smallness, his meaningless, or the darkness of his existence as locked up in itself. This is because once man's smallness admitted, that smallness makes

inexplicable the man's existence without God. The more reduced the man feels himself, the emptier, the more clearly, he sees on himself that he cannot exist except through God, and the more he will feel the presence of God as his own foundation.

The humbleness is upheld within man right by the fact that the man realizes the world's limits and his limits, by living all sorts of imperfections (illnesses, death, the world's incapacity to really and definitively satisfy the man), and the man still cannot reach the edge of the cosmos and he cannot ever reach the consummate self-knowledge.

In the human being's imperfections and the world's imperfections and in the continuous unsatisfaction which these ones leave us through themselves, it is shown their limitation, but in the man's impossibility to reach their edges with his knowledge we ascertain their indefinite. They appear to us as indefinite and as limitation in the same time. The world is finite because of not being one with God; but the world is infinite because it has been created by the infinite God and the world is in connection with God and with the man as image of God.

The man is indefinite regarding the complexity and the permanent novelty of his spirit. Due to that the man is made for progressing into the self-knowledge, but the man cannot go all the way to the end in this self-knowledge. And even if the man had reached that end, he wouldn't have exited his imperfection. And the world is inferior to the man because of being an object of knowledge lacking an own conscience and lacking the capacity for communicating its love in a conscious manner, and it lacks the capacity to consciously know on itself. Still, the man has been created so that he cannot totally dispose of the world's physical existence and also the man cannot reach the world's edges without knowledge. Thus, both the human self and the physical world, they appear to be, on one hand, as a limitation, as imprinted with imperfections and with helplessness, but on the other hand they appear to be as exceeding their own powers of disposing of themselves, and this is especially in what regards the man's powers to know on himself and to know the two realities all the way to their edges.

The man progresses in self-knowledge and in the knowledge of the world, in an indefinite whose end the man cannot reach, but which, on the other hand, it constantly closes the man's thoughts and feelings on the same unsatisfactory plan. The man progresses in knowing the world, but he

progresses in knowing some endlessly specified aspects of the same general laws, while remaining with the knowledge about the physical world and of the knowledge about himself on a finite and in the same time indefinite plan.

Both of these show that the man's self and the world, once they are finite, but in the impossibility to be comprised one through another, they are dependent, but not on one another, but on a superior reality.

What could exist like, through itself an imperfect world? If that world existed through itself, what it could not be perfect like?

This question was given by the antiquity's philosophy a pantheistic, emanationist, or evolutionist answer. It was said that the foundation if perfect, but the things emanated from that foundation are imperfect, or that they will reach the perfection by evolution. But what could come out of it those imperfect emanations like, once they have started on the road of perfection since eternity, since they have been existing? Only the idea of the existential difference between the foundation of the world and our world it could answer the problem of the world's imperfection. The foundation is uncreated, while the world is created. It is the same regarding the man. But the world and the man could achieve the perfection by remaining in perfect communication with their foundation. But this was left as the disposal of the human freedom. Only the freedom of the created conscious beings can bring the world to perfection. But neither the world nor the man can sip their perfection out of themselves. This is because otherwise they won't be forced to reach perfection. If that had bene the case, there wouldn't have been freedom in creation.

Thus, thought created, the world appears as invested by its Creator with the greatest value. The world's perfection depends on its freedom. The world reaches this perfection through the freely accepted communion with its foundation, Who, in addition to the fact that He is fee and loving, He also created the world out of His love, in order the world to reach the happiness of the consummation, by freely accepting His love. Only a created world can be a world of the freedom and a world of the love, due to the fact that it is the work of a fee and loving person-like foundation. Otherwise, everything would have stayed under the necessity of some laws of the repetition which cannot give a meaning to the existence. The man and the world

are not some slaves carried away by the monotonous repetition of some laws, because the man and the world have been created by a free and loving Being. And imperfect existence dominated by such paws all the way to its foundation, it would have presented right those laws as inexplicable, as lacking any conscience and freedom. A general, fatal, and imperfect blindness would have dominated the entire existence, and that would be totally meaningless.

By explaining the world and the man as God's creations, the Christian faith related the man's growth to his humbleness, as a conscience of his dependency on God the Creator, but also on the man's love for his Creator, a love that keeps the man in connection with the Creator.

A great tole in man's advancement towards achieving his real image, it is played by man's patience in troubles. Patiently enduring the troubles, it really strengthens the man's spirit, while the attempt to avoid troubles it will make the man spiritually drowsy. BY enduring the troubles, the man shows that his strength doesn't come from an attachment to the world, but the man's strength comes from the Almighty and loving God. The world alternates the pleasures it provides, with many troubles. Themselves the slavery and the weakness which the passions lower the man into – as excessive attachments to the world -, they show the world's incapacity to consummate the man, namely to save the man. The man, in his life, he is especially united through his spirit with the non-passing and infinite God. That's why the man must cultivate his relationship with God, so that the man will be liberated from the world and the man will truly become the world's master. All the searches for avoiding the troubles, for having a comfortable life by the things offered by the world, are intertwines with the egotism that breaks the man from another man, an egotism that impeded the man from advancing towards the Kingdom of Heavens that is the Kingdom of Love between man and God and between man and another man. That's why Barsanuphius and John reckoned that there is no other road to the Kingdom of Heavens except by patiently suffering the troubles. And they even reckoned that the doing any good it would be intertwined with the suffering of some trouble, because of stirring up seen and unseen envy.

The power for suffering the troubles comes to the man out of his relationship with Christ Who, by being the Son of God

made man, he suffered the cross out of love for us, and He didn't allow Himself to be overwhelmed by cross's pains.

Likewise, the whole man's power to be humble it comes out of the kenosis – or the willing depletion of glory – of Christ.

Thus, the man's advancement towards his true image it is an advancement by the power of Christ and towards the likeness to Christ as man; the man's advancement has Christocentric grounds and target. Only the patience and the humbleness can lead the people to the loving union among themselves, as Christ wanted. But this union cannot be achieved by men except into Christ. This union with Christ consummates us also through the fact that in the same time with it we also achieve the union with other people. Besides, the Son of God made Himself a man on this purpose: in order us to become one with Him. And only the humbleness and the suffering of the troubles patiently, only they will bring us towards that love that can united us. This is for Christ too achieved this real image of the man through kenosis (humbleness) and cross.

Actually, out of Christ's death as sacrifice on the cross we learn and we take power for preparing ourselves towards our own death as an exit from a live closed into ourselves, as tearing down of the barriers which impede us from a full communion.

In suffering the troubles is manifested a relativization of our connections with the worldly realities. Through it the plan of the superior spiritual life can be felt again – the superior spiritual life being characterized by kindness and by love into the eternal life.

This sense of the relativeness of the earthly realities, a sense that weakens our passions, it gives to the man an increasing resting from the worries for the things of this world. That's why the "resting" it is another important spiritual state, perseveringly highlighted by Barsanuphius and John. Through this one it is shown the fact that the world hasn't been created to enslave our spirit, but the world has been created to be transfigured through our spirit united with God, to be take in mastery by our spirit.

If Saint Maximos the Confessor highlighted the "eternal resting reached by the man after his movement towards consummation during his earthly live (contrary to Origen, according to whom the souls constantly turn back from pleroma

and the soul constantly move back and forth from pleroma, because of getting bored of pleroma, and therefore the souls remain in an eternal unrest, or they obtain only passing resting), Barsanuphius explained this resting, by showing that the resting is achieved as a downpayment even from here, by suffering the troubles as relativized hardships, and through humbleness.

By increasing into this "resting" from the worries and from the troubles caused by a too tight attachment to the world, which keep us in a tormenting agitation, we will advance towards the great and imperishable resting of the future life, one that is not a petrifaction, but it is an undisturbed joy for the love which we will live forever into.

The eternal resting reached by them who strengthen on themselves from here by suffering the troubles, it also has within itself a serenity of the conscience of having done nothing evil to anybody, or of having obtained the forgiveness for the evil done to others. Their forgiveness comes to us also through their prayers, after we will have passes away from this life, but also through the prayers of all the people who are part of the Church, especially the saints. From here came the great importance granted in these "Letters" to the forgiveness of ones by others, and to the prayers for others. Asking for forgiveness it will soften down both the soul of his who asks for forgiveness and the soul of him who is asked for forgiveness, as also the granted forgiveness softens up the souls of both of them, and it will make possible the real communication of power and of life from one to another. This is for asking for forgiveness and granting forgiveness both contribute to advancing into humbleness and to set one free from vain-glory.

The communion is especially helped by the prayer of ones for others. Nobody is saved alone; nobody brings joy to God by only praying for himself. God wants us united among ourselves, given that God is the God of the love and God wants to gather all of us together into Himself. That's why, in this striving for uniting ourselves with others, one shown especially in prayer, God Himself is working too. Only in our love for another, a love shown through prayer, we can get humbled and we can liberate ourselves from freedom, as also we can liberate on ourselves from our envy that doesn't rejoice for others' wellness. That's why, only by praying ones for others, we can get our prayers answered by God.

We think that there is no other spiritual book from the period of the Church Fathers that speaks so much and so concretely about the prayer for others, and especially about the prayer of the saints. By that, it is highlighted the meeting of everybody in the catholicity of the prayer. Everyone meets with all the other and with God, in prayer. Each one feels himself responsible for the salvation of the others, and he is called to work for that by praying.

As relative as are the material -things in the vision of the "Letters", as important is the human person: "What would the man benefit if he gained the whole world, but he lost his soul?". I can be saved without material things, or I can be saved more easily if I gather material things without being greedy and without depriving others of their rights. But I cannot be saved without caring about others and without helping them to be saved. It is implied in this the fact that the material things have no value except for humans if used towards increasing the communion among them and for advancing to the eternal communion in the future life. That's why the material things, the galaxies, the cosmos make sense only for humans. Even the ideas and the books preserving the ideas, and which the ideas as transmitted through, over space and time, in order the ideas to be perceived by other consciences, without this purpose the books would have been like inexistence, or they would have been a pure virtuality non-actualized in the benefit of our life and or our eternal communion. The books would have been nothing without people whom the books to serve for their aspiration top communion, an aspiration that is consummated in the eternal communion. Thus, if the cosmos proves to be meaningless without the human persons, the human persons are the great and the important reality giving value to the cosmos. On the other hand, despite the whole their unspeakably superior value, because the human persons cannot cerate the cosmos and they cannot maintain their life in front of it, it will be obvious that there must be a person-like existence superior to the cosmos, namely an existence capable of creating the cosmos and capable of maintaining the cosmos in existence, a being capable of maintain himself in existence in front of the cosmos and capable of giving the cosmos a meaning. But this meaning is not for him who has created the cosmos, but this meaning is for other persons who have a weaker power than the Creator of the cosmos has. But without

a superior existence which to be conscious or the meanings of the existence and of the created world, there would have been absent the original spring of the meanings. And without this spring of meanings there couldn't have had, or there couldn't have come to existence, any existence. In this case there wouldn't have been possible beings capable of reaching to meanings, neither would have been possible a reality with a virtuality of meanings; and there wouldn't have been any guarantee for the value and for the eternal preservation of the meanings noticed by the human conscience, together with the persons who noticed those meanings and who can preserve those meanings in their conscience, in accordance to the person-like supreme spring of all meanings.

The reciprocal forgiveness, the prayer for others, the humbleness, the rejection of the vain-glory, they are equally numerous means which can lead towards the image of the loving man and which can imprint the reports among people with an endless sweetness and delicateness, by leading all people to the Kingdom of Heavens that is the Kingdom of the Consummate Love. The work of Barsanuphius and John is a universal symphony of the love, as manifested in the heard and unheard prayer of all people for all other people, as expression of the together-love of all people, of the move which all people believe in the eternal value and existence of all the other people as unique and non-confoundable persons.

"The Letter of Barsanuphius and John" describe the gradual polishing of the man of everything that has lowered the man below his humanity, a polishing that cannot be done except within the communion among people, a communion nourished out of their communion with God. This polishing work is done not only by God upon each person, but it is a work done also by each person upon himself while always helped by God and by the believers who are spiritually more advanced. We advance together towards a consummate life in communion, which each of us grows up in, in what regards his spiritual strength and his love, in freedom from the own passions and from others' passions, and in communion, towards the Kingdom of God into Trinity, of God of the love. If there we won't live any division among us and between us and God, we must not accept it, with resignation, either here. We cannot have a full and happy life except in communion, in getting far from any egotism.

That's why, another steadfast recommendation formulated by Barsanuphius and John was, on one hand, the cutting off of the own will, but on the other hand they urged us to make efforts in order us to fulfill the will of God Who loves all of us and He wants us to love on one another and He gives us the power that strengthens us to fulfill those. This is for the will of God, contrary to our egotistic will, it is the will that embraces all of us in love. By fulfilling this will of God, we too really contribute to the fulfillment of the ask: "Your will be done". Abd by that, we also contribute to fulfillment of the other asks, as: "Your Kingdom come".

The Present Writing in the Romanian Spiritual Tradition

We have seen that the French translator of this writing spoke about the great influence this writing had over the Orthodox spirituality. This affirmation an be confirmed also by the attention this writing enjoyed in the tradition of the Romanian spirituality. I noticed before translating this writing, the presence of the way of speaking characteristic to the "Letters" among the monks living in the Romanian monasteries. But I didn't know that the Romanian monks learnt this way of speaking from the texts of the "Letters" themselves, as they read these texts in the Romanian monasteries. I believed that the Romanian monks learnt that ways of speaking by frequenting and by living in the monasteries from the Holy Mountain Athos.

But, when I inquired about the existence of this writing among the manuscripts owned by the Library of the Romanian Academia, I found out about its existence in numerous Romanian manuscripts which were translated before the issuing of the Greek edition from the year 1816, most of the manuscripts dating from the time when Abbot Paisius lived at Neamţ Monastery. It is true that most of the manuscripts called as "Miscellaneous" do not contain but a few pages of the "Letters". Such are: "Ms. No. 1913 form the year 1811; Ms. No. 1621 from Cernica Monastery, dating from the XVIII Century, originating from Argeş Monastery; Ms. 1995 from Cernica Monastery and dating from XVIII Century; Ms. no. 1994 from the year 1793, originating also from Cernica Monastery and signed by Saint Calinic; Ms. no. 2100 from the XVIII Century, originating from Lainic Monastery; Ms. no. 2115, dating from

the year 1789; Ms. no. 2466 from the XVIII Century, originating from Argeş Monastery; Ms. no. 5548 originating from XVIII Century; Ms. no. 5944 dating from XIX Century; Ms. no. 3574 dating from the XVIII Century.

Manuscripts containing the whole writing are: Ms. no. 3723 from the year 1787, f.1 r. – 343 r.; Ms. no. 1532, ff. 1-327 from the XIX Century; Ms. no. 1539, ff. 1-366.

About the last-mentioned manuscript, it is specified that: "This book belongs to the monastic community of Abbot Paisius, Saint Monastery Secu". It seems that the whole work is given also in the Ms. no. 2147, that comprised 604 pages, and that originates from the disciples of Abbot Paisius from Neamţ Monastery; and in the manuscript no. 1899, from the year 1796, containing 426 pages and entitled: The Book of the Holy Abbots, or the Great Barsanuphius and John". On this manuscript it is also specified the fact that it originates form Cernica Monastery, from the time of Archimandrite Gheorghe, Disciple of Paisius, as a copy made after a translation from the year 1789 from Neamţ Monastery. This manuscript is also signed by Saint Calinic.

Also, the Ms. no. 3723, entitles "The Book of Abba Barsanuphius" it appears to be a translation from Greek, made at Neamţ Monastery, by an anonymous monk, and revised by the "Teacher Ilarion", whom we know about that he had such authority that Paisius didn't dare to do his translations in Slavonic (printed in Russia under the title of Dobrotoliubie) directly from Greek, be he translated according to the Romanian translations made by Ilarion and Makarios (Cetvericov).

More attentive research could find out whether all the manuscripts of the translation are copies after the translations mentioned above, or there existed other translations as well.

We are going to give below, form the Ms. 3723, f. 346 r., about its translation. Then, we are going to give from the same manuscript, as sample of Romanian text from that time, the questions and the answers no. 314 and 315. They are remarkable by many words which have been preserved in the succulent language of our monastic and peasant tradition, despite the whole clumsiness and some inexactitudes making them difficult to read maybe even at the time they were written.

Ms. 3723, f. 346 r.: "[3]Has been translated this holy and useful-to-soul book of Saint Barsanuphius, from the Hellenic language into our Romanian language, by someone among the all-small and last disciples of Abbot Paisius and it was seen by Teacher Ilarion."

F. 176(3)-177(v).

Question of the same one.

My thought tells me that the quietude is more necessary than everything, and it is useful to one. Does it tell me right?

Answer of John.

The quietude is without one restraining his heart from giving and form taking and from being pleasant to people and from the other things; for the Lord rebuked that teacher for that man who fell among thieves and asked him who was his neighbor, and the teacher answered that him who have mercy on that man. The Lord also said: "I want mercy and not sacrifice". So, once you have understood that the mercy is greater than the sacrifice, lean tour heart towards mercy. This is also for the producing of the quietude bring one to high-cogitation, before he will have gained on himself, namely the man must become righteous for then will be the quietude, for he has worn the cross, so that if you have mercy you will find help; but if you hold on yourself as exceeding the measure, learn that you will lose even that what you will have had before, so that neither within nor outside you must travel, but on the middle, by understanding what the God's will is, because all the days are bad.

Question of the same one: "Unveil to me, master, how neither inside nor outside, but o the middle; must I not appoint certain days to the quietude, and certain days to the worries?

Answer of John:

Not to hope either for quietude nor to defame into taking care, this is the middle path that doesn't fall, and having quietude towards humbleness and into taking care for watchfulness and shouting out wit the thought; there is not time limit, all the more of days; but somebody owed to suffer with thanks the things coming upon him; and all the ones from the monastery must be compassionate. This is for the apostle's command fulfills: namely, if somebody is troubles, let him be

[3] We kindly warn the reader that conveying in English the style of the Romanian language used in the samples it cannot be done but partially (if at all). (E. l. t's. n.)

troubled together with him: in order to save him, in order to heal his soul, for this is the mercifulness and suffering together with the helplessness and helping to their healings, it is good, because if the doctor is paid for taking care of the ill man, all the more will be rewarded him who commiserates in everything with his neighbor, according to his power; for if somebody will have mercy on everything, he will fulfill his will even in what he suffers.

Anonymous

BARSANUPHIUS

and

JOHN

SPIRITUAL LETTERS

1. *Answer of the Great Oldman (or of Barsanuphius) towards Abba John from Bathsheba[4], who asked him to allow him to come and live by their side, in their common monastery.*

It is written in the Apostle that "He who started within you the good work, Himself will fulfill that work until the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1: 6). And again, our Master said to the one who came to Him: "If somebody doesn't reject everything he has and his nation, or if he doesn't event hate his own soul, he could not be My disciple" (Lk. 14: 33, and 26). And it is possible to God Him to fulfill this word for us. "For what is better and more pleasant than the brothers living together?" (Ps. 132: 1[5]).

So, I pray for you, you to reach that measure written in Acts: "All of them who had wealth they sold it and bringing the price of the dols things they place it at the feet of the Apostles" (Acts 4: 34-35).

And knowing I your zeal, as being according to God, I said to our beloved son, Serid, who has covered us with God from the care for people (and we hope in God that you too will be covered together with us): "Welcome brother John with much love and do not doubt at all. This is for even two years earlier God unveiled me that he was to come here and many among the brothers were to come to us. And I have been guarding the unveiling until seeing what the Lord has done. Therefore, when the time has come, I talked about that unveiling to you too".

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[4] In the Greek text: Μεσωραβι.

[5] In King John Bible (from now on abbreviated as KJB) we have: Ps. 133: 1: "BEHOLD, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"; in the Romanian Orthodox Bible (from now on abbreviated as ROB) we have: Ps. 132: 1: "Behold, now, what it is good and what it is beautiful, except only the brothers to live together!" (E. l. t.'s n.)

And for I have reckoned to send you something of the things I wear, behold I have taken my monastic hat off my head and I am sending it to you through the brother, saying to him: "Give this one to him, and bring me another, in exchange". Therefore, you keep that to your death. For it will shelter you against many evils and temptations. Do not give it to somebody else. For it is the blessing from God to you, through my hands. And force on yourself to bring your work to the end and liberate yourself of any other worry, like we have been liberated too. And sit with us, within the whole carelessness, bestowing on yourself to God.

And I, Serid[6], I am telling you a wonderful thing. While the Oldman was speaking these things, I thought into myself: how can I memorize all of these, so that I will be able to write them down? If the Oldman wanted, I would bring here ink and paper so that to write down any word I hear from him. But the Oldman knew what I was thinking, and his face started glowing like fire, and he told me: "Go and write, and do not fear. If I told you tens of thousands of words to write down, the Ghost of God wouldn't let you writing either more or less words than I told you, even if you wanted that, for He will lead your hand in order you to write these down one at a time.

2. Answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same one, heralding him in advance the diverse sorts of troubles which were to come upon him and his bodily helplessness united with those troubles, but also his souly progress he will have it out of those troubles.

Tell to brother John[7]: Strengthen you hear as a hard stone. And I call as stone the strength of the soul, in order you to be able to bear what I am going to tell you. So, take heed at yourself, lets by hearing these things you to get haughty in your heart, and so you to fall off the spiritual promise. This is because many were lost because of their haughtiness, even

[6] Serid(os) was the founder and the hegumen of the monastery and in the same time he was the servant of Barsanuphius and John, and he was the one who was writing the answers and who was sending the answers to their recipients. In this letter Serid is adding this paragraph from himself.

[7] The Oldman addressed himself to Serid to write down this answer and to send it to the same John.

among those who reached the measure. So, prepare yourself to give thanks in everything, listening to the Apostle who says: "Give thanks in everything" (1 Thess. 5: 18), "either into troubles, or in needs, or in tribulations" (2 Cor. 6: 4), or in bodily toils and helplessness. Give thanks to God in all the things coming upon you. This is for I hope that you too will "enter His resting" (Hebr. 4: 1). "This is because through many troubles we have to enter the Kingdom of God" (Acts 14: 22). Therefore, you do not doubt in your soul, and let not your heart to weaken in anything. And remember the Apostle's word "that even if the outside man gets broken, the inside man gets renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4: 16).

So, if you do not endure the sufferings, you won't be able to reach the cross. And if you firstly endure the sufferings, you will enter the realm of His resting. And then you will be appeased into the whole carelessness, by having your soul fortified and stuck with the Lord forever, and guarded into faith, and rejoicing into hope, and gladdening into love, and guarding into the Holy and of-one-being Trinity. And then will be fulfilled with you that what was said: "Let the heavens gladden, and let the earth rejoice" (Ps. 95: 11[8]). This is the worriless life of the man of God. This is, my beloved brother, that the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost rejoice of your salvation.

3. Answer of another Oldman towards the same one, who asked him for a meeting.

Tell to my brother: Forgive me, for the Lord, for I want to see you, but I cannot find any spare time because of the conscience of others. But I rejoice myself for the love for the blessings sent to you by the Holy Oldman. And blessed are you for you have been found worthy of those.

4. Because a temptation occurred for the monks form the places where Abba John was living before coming to the common monastery, and because there was an uprising while he was

[8] In KJB we have: Ps. 96: 11: "Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof."; in ROB we have: Ps. 95: 11: "Let the heavens gladden and let the earth rejoice, let the sea shaken and all the things from within it." (E. l. t.'s n.)

there, and by spiritually knowing those things in advance, the Oldman wrote him the followings:

Wrote to brother John: Behold, I am sending you three testimonies of the power of God, from the Scriptures of the Holy Ghost, which I want to wake your mind up through, in order you to know what fits the present times[9].

The first testimony is this: "God told to Prophet Isaiah: "Go my people, enter your room, clock up your door, hide yourself for a little while until the anger of the Lord will pass" (Isa. 26: 20).

The second testimony is this: "Get out from their middle and differ from them and do not touch that what is unclean, sys the Lord, and I will receive you and I will be like a Father to you, and you will be sons and daughters to Me, says the All-Keeper Lord" (Isa. 17: 18).

The third testimony: "Take care of what you are walking like, not like some unwise, but like some wisemen, by redeeming the time because the days are bad" (Eph. 5: 15-16).

And I am saying to you: Run towards the things ahead of you and quickly consummate your work, by remembering about the lord Who says: he who lays his hand on the plow, but who turns towards the things from the back, he won't prepare himself for the Kingdom of Heavens" (Lk. 9: 62). For I am looking at the peaceful life that is into our Lord Christ Jesus Whom to be the glory forever. Amen.

5. Answer of the same Great Oldman towards Abba[10] who was sad because of Abba John was late and that's why he thought that Abba John wasn't coming at all.

Do not be discouraged, my son, neither be you sad because of our brother. This is for, even he is missing with his body, he is always with us. This is for he is of one soul with us and nothing separated him from our love from now and forever.

[9] Or of John, also called as The Prophet, towards the same John from Bethsheba.
[10] Or towards the monastery's hegumen: Serid.

6. The Letter of the same Great Oldman written towards Abba John, who was occupying on himself, in his country, with some things needed for monastery and he was troubled by a war waged him by his own body[11].

Write to your father: you are still outside, toiling according to your power, for God and for your brothers' souls, better said for our and yours resting and peace. This is for, if our brothers are resting and are sheltered through us, we too will find through them the consummate resting[12]; and it will be fulfilled with us the written word: "A brother helped by another brother is like a fortified and surrounded by walls stronghold" (Prov. 18: 19).

Cut oof all the ties and all the apparent causes had by you as long as you are outside, and do not permit any contrived cause and any connection with somebody to draw you towards the old things. This is because, if you do not do such, you won't be able to appease on yourself into a consummate quietude. This is for we have done it so. By doing so, I hope that you will consummately appease on yourself, with the help of God, and your odds and your part will be with us forever. Let nobody find out, for now, about the things I have written to you as answer to your request, and if you work goes well, you will thank God and pray to Him. This is for, this is what it means: "Give thanks in everything" (1 Thess. 5: 18). Let's not overlook our duty to give thanks to God. Let's do as did him whom the parable said yore about: He went to pray within church to be appointed to him to find out something to eat and he met somebody who told him: come and eat with me, today, and then go and pray, but he answered: I am not coming, for I have left in order to ask this from God. Therefore, us too, either we find or we do not find, we will give God prayer and thanks. Take heed at always bearing within your body the cross of Christ[13].

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[11] This answer was sent by Abba Barsanuphius to Abba John from Bethsheba. It is not about Abba John surnames The Prophet, who live in Serid's monastery. Abba John from Bethsheba came in Serid's monastery, but later on he went to his country for procuring some things for Serid's monastery.

[12] By helping our brothers to gain the resting and the peace against the body's war, their resting and their peace will come back to us, so that we too will gain more resting and peace.

[13] From here one can see that the body's war endured by the recipient of the answer, it was from hunger. Barsanuphius told him that is good to bear this cross too, within his body, for it will shelter him against other lusts as well. In the same time, he must pray to God. This is for God will provide him, when He will see fit, the needed food.

7. Answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same one who thought at going with the brothers to pick up the things they needed for manual labor, but he feared of the wilderness of those places[14]. He reminded him to take heed at the war of the body that bothers, and he promised him the help from God in this departure which he took the responsibility for, upon himself.

Tell him who has been called by an entrustment from high, to come and live next to us not only in the present age, but also in the age to come, to our brother and the one of-one-soul with us, John: Our Master Christ told to His disciples: "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny, but none of them will fall on the ground without the will of My Father Who is in heavens. To you, thought, even the hairs of your head are numbered. Therefore, do not fear. You are more precious than a great number of sparrows. Everyone who will bear witness for Me in front of the people, I too will be his witness in front of My Father from heavens" (Mt. 10: 29-32). Therefore, take heed at yourself, so to watchfully place God always before you, in order to be fulfilled, regarding you, the prophetic word: "I saw the Lord always before me, for He is at my right side, so I won't wabble" (Ps. 15: 8[15]). Therefore, stretch your hands, with the whole your soul, towards the things you have to accomplish, in order you to hear the voice of God telling you: "Behold, I am sending My angel before your face, and he will prepare your way in front of you" (Mt. 3: 1; 11: 100).

8. That one, after toiling a lot, because of not finding the things he was searching for manual labor he got sad and he wondered why "hasn't been sent the angel before his face", according to the Oldman's words. He didn't know that the Oldman told him that in order to ease up his departure. That's why the Oldman wrote him the followings:

[14] They were to go, probably, to gather material for weaving baskets.

[15] In KJB we have: Ps. 16: 8: "I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved."; in ROB we have: Ps. 15: 8: "I have been seeing the Lord always before me, for He is at my right side so I won't wobble." (E. l. t.'s n.)

Write to your brother that as long as the ship in at sea, it expects dangers and the blows of the winds. But when the ship reaches the shore of the quietude and of the peace, it will no longer fear the dangers, the troubles, or the winds' blows, but the ship will be in quietude. Likewise, you our beloved brother, as long as you are with the people, you expect troubles and dangers and the attacks of the immaterial winds; but if you reach the things prepared for you, you will be without fear. And regarding what I told you before, that our Master said: "Behold I will send My angel in front of your face", the angels had actually been sent. And about the fact that you haven't found the materials needed for manual labor, God wrote in Moses's book: "That's why he detoured you and punished you and exhausted you with hunger in that scarry desert, in order you to know the things form within your heart" (The Second Law 8: 2-3). Understand, our beloved brother, the things I told you, and keep yourself strong and unhesitatingly in your toil.

9. The letter of the same Oldman towards the same brother who left for the needs of the monastery and he got discouraged for the many troubles which he reached in.

Write, my son, to our brother John, that we embrace him into the Lord, I and you and our brother John. And tell him: do not get discouraged in the bodily troubles and hardships which you are enduring for us and for our community. This is for, by doing so, you put your soul for brothers and I hope that your reward for this toil will be abundant. And like God appointed Josephus to feed his brother during the hunger in Egypt, so God appointed you too to help the monastery together with my son Serid. And I am telling you the word of the Apostle towards Timothy: "Therefore, you son, strengthen on yourself in the grace of the Holy Ghost" (2 Tim. 2: 10). For I am seeing how your peace will come to you and I am rejoicing together with you into the Lord. This is for, as long as you live outside, you will find trouble and bodily toil. But if you reach the shore of the quietude, you will find resting and peace. This is for non-liar is our Master Who says: "I will give to them hundredfold in the present age and eternal life in the age to come" (Mk. 10: 30). You strive, therefore, brother, with the whole your heart, in order you to find more love and resting. This is because, before

reaching the harbor, the ship is pounded and shaken by waves and by swirls. But when the ship reached the harbor, it finally finds much peace. Understand the said things and keep them. "For the Lord will give you understanding in everything" (2 Tim. 2: 7).

10. The answer of the same Oldman towards the same brother, after a stone fell on his feet and it caused him much pain and discouragement.

To our beloved into the Lord brother John, joyfulness. According to your body's toil for us, and due to the crushing of your leg for us, may our Master God fill your soul up, my beloved one, with the heavenly goods, in a hundredfold manner. Understand, brother, the words written by me, for they will make you feel a heavenly and dominating and godlike joy. This is for, in the name of the Holy Trinity, I am unveiling to you that you are together-inheritor of my charismas, given to me by God. And I expect you to quickly reach at Him by advancing step by step. This is for, through your toils for God, you will reach God's resting. And I hope that you will have both of them if the sadness will die within your heart, by being your wrath chocked up within you. Then will be fulfilled in you the word: "See my humbleness and my toil and forgive all my sins" (Ps. 24: 18[16]). And regarding the fact that I told you that you will reach, by advancing step by step, think at the Gospels, how and for how many times Christ gave His disciples the charismas of the healings and of the casting of devils out, as also the consummate charisma of forgetting the sins, by saying them: "Who you will forgive their sins, forgiven they will be" (Jn. 20: 23). So, when God forgives your sin for your great toil, you have reached the measure which I want you to reach at.

And if you find in my letter words which to be difficult to understand, you will ask Serid, he who is of-one-soul with you, my beloved son, and by the grace of God he will explain to you

[16] In KJB we have: Ps. 26: 18: "Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins."; in ROB we have: Ps. 25: 19: "See my humbleness and my toil and forgive me all my sins." (E. l. t.'s n.)

the words which you find as more difficult to understand. This is for I have prayed to God for him, in this regard.

Therefore, you the man of God, run on the road prepared for you in order you to joyfully reach the shore of Christ, which we have reached too, and you to hear the voice of the fulfilled joy, or the life, of the light, and of the gladness, saying to you: "Well done, you good and faithful servant, enter the joy of your Lord" (Mt. 25: 21). Rejoice yourself into the Lord, rejoice yourself into the Lord, rejoice yourself into the Lord! May the Lord guard your soul and your body against any evil and against any devilish opposition and against any hallucination causing disturbance. The Lord will be your light, your shelter, your way, your strength, your crown, your gladness, and your upholder for eternity. Take heed at yourself, because it has been written: "Do not disregard the words exiting My lips" (Ps. 88: 35[17]).

11. The answer of the same Oldman towards the same brother, urging the brother to remember the things wrote to him, for his benefit and for supporting his heart.

Solomon said about his parents: "They who were teaching me, they were telling me: may our word to be planted within your heart" (Prov[18]. 4: 4). I am telling you the same, brother: may my words be planted within your heart and you always cogitate at all the words I wrote to you, as God said through the mouth of Moses: "Glue them on your right hand and they will be always steadfast before your eyes and cogitate at them when you go to bed, when you wake up, when you walk on the road, and when you go to sleep within your house" (Second Law 6: 6-8). Therefore, you show these into the consummation of your deeds and my God will be with you forever. Amen.

[17] In KJB we have: Ps. 89: 34: "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips."; in ROB we have: Ps. 88: 34: "Neither will I break My covenant, and the words coming out of My lips I will not change." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[18] In ROB this book is called as: "The Parables of Solomon". (E. l. t.'s n.)

12[19]. The same one commanded to the brother a thing and because the brother didn't accomplish that thing quickly, he rebuked that brother. And because the brother got sad, the Oldman commanded him no to talk about that to any of the brothers. On that purpose, the Oldman told the brother the followings:

Tell to brother John: Our time is weak. And with much toil you find, in the present time, a man with a strong heart. But keep the word of the Apostle who says: "Reproach, rebuke, urge with long-patience and with teaching" (2 Tim. 4: 2).

13. Being erected a building in the monastery, that one (Abba John) as a skillful man, he drew the measures of the work. But some of the brothers, without him knowing it, they reckoned to do a good thing by adding something to those measures and they change the plan a little. And being that one troubled and discouraged because of them, he showed that to the Oldman. The Oldman answered him:

Tell to our brother John, who cogitates alike us: Many are the thing wrote to you, by me, through the hand of our beloved and sincere son, who loves us with the whole his soul, equally, on all three of us[20], with consummate love and I am writing all of these not out of my own will, but by the command of the Holy Ghost, towards straightening and towards the benefit of your soul, and of you man from within, for troubles and for the persecution of your body, and for the crushing of your heart. In the first place, you shun on yourself against the ghost of the discouragement, because it gives birth to all evil and to diverse troubles. If I wrote you the temptations suffered by me, I would tell you that your ears couldn't bear hearing those; and not even the ears of anybody in the present time. But I hope that you will reach them and you will even see them with your own eyes, and you will be delivered from them by the grace of Christ and by your will. Why gets your heart weakened and

[19] This is not our numbering mistake or our omission of questions-and-answers between 7 and 12. This is what it has been printed like, in the Romanian text. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[20] Abba John came to the monastery for he loved the Great Oldman Barsanuphius, and on John also called as the Prophets, and on Abba Serid. This son is Serid, who served like writer and sender of the letters of Barsanuphius to John.

discouraged, because of the sheep of Christ? Don't you know what headaches endures the good teacher from the part of his children until the children become sapient? But you heard from me the word of the Apostle: "Reproach, rebuke, urge with the whole long-patience and teaching" (2 Tim. 4: 2). Listen and take heed at the things which I am telling you. The long-patience is the birth-giver of all goods. Think at Moses who better chose "to suffer together with his people than to have the passing sweetness of the sin" (Hebr. 11: 25). Therefore, when the thought from the devil troubles you against some man, you tell that thought to have patience: have I submitted myself to God and still I hit others?[21]. And that thought will leave you alone. You run manly and with strength, remembering my words, or better said the Lord's words, in order you to understand us into Jesus, our Lord. May that be! Amen.

14. The answer of the same Great Oldman, towards the same brother, for he endured with difficulty to heart one of the brothers saying, in order to humiliate him: And who is this? And what is him upset for?

You tell to your brother: As Michal is judged for the body of Moses (Jude 9), likewise I am fighting for you, until you will be delivered form your former man. But the Jews too murmured against our Savior and told Him: "Isn't this the son of Josephus? Don't we know his mother and his brothers? (Jn. 6: 42; Mt. 13: 55). Think at these and endure it to the end (Mt. 10: 22)[22].

15. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother who was still not delivered from his discouragement:

[21] I have obeyed myself to God, fulfilling greater works, but I still get upset when others disobey me in fulfilling these works? Should they be the servants of my commandments?

[22] Michal was fighting the devil for Moses's body, which the devil claimed it for who knows what gossip. The Great Oldman was fighting for Abba John not to fall prey for others' slandering. And who escaped the Jews' slandering? Not even Jesus was spared by them. But the slandering must not become to us a temptation so that we will get upset on those who contrive it.

Tell to your brother: "I remember the prophecy of Jeremiah the Prophet: "Who will give water to my head and spring of tears to my eyes so that I could cry for this people day and night?" (Jer. 9: 1). I expected you to be nourished by the hard food and I am seeing you again needing milk (Hebr. 5: 12). Look at what has been written: "And you clean me of my hidden things" (Ps. 18: 13[23]). Take heed and not allow yourself to be kidnapped by evil dragons and they to spill their venom on you. Because of being bringer of death. This is because one will never correct the good with the evil, because of being conquered by evil. But the evil is being corrected with the good (Rom. 12: 21). Behold, you are in the stadium: you owe to fight the wild beasts, as the Apostle did (1 Cor. 15: 32). For he praised on himself as he defeated the wild beasts. You have been thrown into the storm of the sea in order you to endure many dangers and to fight the fury of the waves. And by being victorious, by the help of God, you will come with us to the shore of the quietude, into Christ Jesus, our Lord Whom to be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

16. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother, who started to get upset on his brothers, because of some bricks were destroyed by rain. And he blamed the brother for that, because of their carelessness. By knowing in advance that that was to make him thinking bad things about Abba too, he woke him up and he strengthened him up, in advance, against such thoughts, by reminding him also about the true love had by Abba for him, so that the brother could reject by that recall to reject the thought enemy to him.

Do a deed of love, my son, and think at bringing ink and paper and leave for now the answer which you have come to me for, and, firstly, write down a salutation to brother John from my part. This is because he is on the way to get upset on others and to be upset by them. And tell him: Rejoice yourself into our Lord, my brother. The sea's weaves are many, but isn't there

[23] In KJB we have: Ps. 19: 12: "Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults."; in ROB we have: Ps. 18: 13: "Who will understand my mistakes? Clean me up of my hidden things" (E. l. t.'s n.)

anyone to wake Jesus up so that He to rebuke the winds and there to be calm whether, so that they could know Jesus and worship Him? (Mt. 8: 22). If all the things are vain and perishing, why your heart is pushed towards them, so that if forgets the evangelical word: "What would the man benefit if he gained the whole world, but he lost his soul" (Mt. 16: 26). Know this, my brother, that if somebody upset another either with his deed, or with his words, that one will have later a hundredfold annoyance. For many times have been written to you, at my request, the Lord's words from the Scripture, so that you to have long-patience in everything and to take heed at not being your will mixed[24]. But, when you send me some question through my beloved Son Serid, who is always upset because of seeing you upset, force on yourself to keep your thoughts under guard, in order your thoughts not to cast some deadly venom within your heart and so you to reckon the mosquito as a camel and the sand grain as a marketplace. This is because so was the man who had a beam in his eye but he took heed at the straw from another's eye (Mt. 7: 3-5).

I have written you these things as I would have written them to my soul. For I know that your heart will rejoice of them. This is for it is said that: "Rebuke the wise" and the other things (Prov. 9: 8). And, you know, brother, how much I have you into the love of Christ.

I hope that you are, finally, close not to worry anymore about the earthly things, and close to be in the spiritual work of the Fathers. This is for, my Lord Christ won't shame me, for I am praying to Him say and night for you[25].

17. A question of the same brother addressed to the same Great Oldman. Father, I know that this happens to me for my sins; and I know that I am mindless because of my evilness. Ands he who drives me into such a trouble is Abba, for he

[24] Not to be our will divides between the good and the evil things, or not to be united with some evil thought, or with some deed unpleasant to God.

[25] One must not make a cause for a bit grief out of any unimportant word or gesture belonging to somebody. The clean life and the ceaseless prayer, unscattered, it gives the saint not the proud certitude as lacking any vibration, that his ask will be fulfilled, but it gives him a strong trust, one that is not void of the continuous tension of the asking, hoping that he will be listened to. There is in prayer a continuous struggle, but a struggle full of hope. There is not absent from it either the hope or the struggle.

doesn't take care and he overlooks the things. And these things are lost because of Abba and I cannot stand that. And what should I do, for I want to gather my thoughts[26]*, but I am powerless? Forgive me because: "I said once, I won't add it (say it) for the second time" (Job 39: 35). And I wonder about the fact that my love that I had before for my brothers it has diminished. Prayer for me, for the Lord.*

Answer: Brother, remember that our Lord told His disciples: "You too are now unskilled?" (Mt. 15: 16). I told you to guard your thoughts. If you toiled to guard your thoughts, you would find out that the power which you have recently written to me about, I showed it to you in a previous letter, and it was no need for you to ask again about that. Still, I am going to add another answer to your question.

But first I am reproaching you. You have called on yourself as sinner, but you do not reckon yourself as such in your deeds. This is because, he who reckons on himself as sinner and as cause of the evil things, he won't resist anyone, he doesn't wage wars, he doesn't get angry against someone, but he will reckon all people as better than he is. And if your thoughts make you say, without joking, that you are a sinner, how come that your thoughts move your heart against them who are better that you are? Take heed, brother, at the fact that this isn't the truth. Therefore, we haven't reached yet to really reckon on ourselves as sinners[27]. That's why, when somebody loves the ones who reproaches him, he proved to be a wise man. But if he says that he loves that one but he doesn't do what that one tells him to do, he rather hates that one. If you are a sinner,

[26] Answering the tempting thoughts by refusing to listen to them.

[27] This is a complicated state of the soul: you can say about yourself that you are a sinner, as a joke, or because of a false humbleness. This doesn't mean that we must not tell that we are sinners. But your statement that you are a sinner there must correspond to it an admission, within yourself, that you are a sinner. In other words, this statement must really urge you to overcome your sin. So, when you state that you are a sinner, but you will behave proudly and enviously with others, these behaviors of yours contradict your statement that you are a sinner, for you actually show that you do not reckon on himself as being a sinner. Your real conscience that you are a sinner ought to help you always fight away your evil thoughts. That is a very complex state. He who actually reckon on himself as being a sinner, he will always fight against everything he sees as non-consummated within himself, but on the other hand no man reached to be consummate. A sign that you do not only brag with a false humbleness, it is that of not getting yourself upset when somebody agrees your statement that you are a sinner.

why do you blame him and rebuke him because your trouble has come to you through him? Don't you know that each one is tempted by his own lust? (Jas. 1: 14), and that is what give birth to your trouble? This is what I wrote you about the brothers, not to take the mosquito as a camel and so on. You should rather pray for them to be partakers to you into your fear of God. And when you say about yourself that you are unskillful, do not say it jokingly, but examine on yourself and you will ascertain that you do not reckon as such about yourself. This is because, if you were such, you should not get angry, because you would not be able to discern whether the work has been done well of badly[28]. But he who is unskilled he is stupid. And he who is unskilled and stupid he will be unskilled in his judgments. And how could the unwise to correct and make others wise? Can't you see, brother, that we are speaking jokingly, and only with our mouths, and this is proven by our deeds. That's why when we answer to our thoughts, we have no power, because of firstly accepting to condemn on our brother, so that the power of our ghost weakens[29], and we blame our brother while the culpable are ourselves, actually[30]. If you reckon that everything belongs to God who shares His mercy, and neither to him who wants, not to him who runs (Rom. 9: 16), why can't you understand that, and why you do not love your brother with a consummate love?[31] This is because, there were many who wanted to equal us the Fathers, and they were running on that purpose, but it was not given them to reach us. That's why, because he was unable to succeed, God has sent us to him and God has made him our sincere son. This is for God loves the inward will.

In what regards the word: "I said that once" and so on, if you fight for reaching yourself there, you will be happy. But that hasn't been given to everybody.

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[28] You say that you are unskilled, but you say that jokingly. This is because, if you really reckoned on yourself as unskilled, you shouldn't get angry with any of your brothers because of him doing something wrong, because of being you unskillful so that you wouldn't be able to assess whether something has been done well or wrongly.

[29] L. Regnault and Philippe Lemaire translated wrongly the Greek word εκνενρουται as "getting angry".

[30] We won't be able to defeat our own thought once we condemn our brother. Instead, just by doing that, we will strengthen our thoughts.

[31] If everything belong to God, how could we justify the fact that we brag on ourselves and we defame somebody else, because of reckoning him that he impeded from doing our deed?

And regarding the other thoughts of yours, bring to God every one of your thoughts, saying: "God know what is beneficial". And you will have rest. And gradually, it will come to you're the power to endure. Do not cease from saying. And if you say but nobody seems to hear you, neither you find grace (obedience) to your word, you won't get sad. But you will benefit even more of that.

And regarding the things which you wonder about, the consummate love doesn't fall, and he who has achieved the consummate love he will remain warm by being locked into his love for God and for his neighbor.

As about the prayer which you have written about, at the end, be satisfied with the word which I have written to you, for I am praying for you to God ceaselessly, day and night. So, you have asked, uselessly, for this one too. So, you have from me that nourishment according to God, for a log time from now on. Persevere and wait for the Lord, into Christ Jesus our Lord Whom is due the glory forever. Amen.

18. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother, who asked him where are coming from the warmth and the coldness and the callousness of the heart; and about the bodily war.

About warmth and coldness, it is a known fact that our Lord was called as fire that warms up and sets in fire our heart and entrails (Ps. 7: 9[32]; 35: 2[33]). If it is so, that you will reckon the devil as coldness, and all the coldness as coming from him. If it hadn't been so, how would our Lord have said that "then the love of many will get cold" (Mt. 24: 12)? And what would have meant "then" if it hadn't been about the times of the enemy? So, when we feel the coldness, let's call on God and He will come and warm up our heart towards loving Him and our neighbor with a consummate love. And by being His warmth present, the coldness of the hater-of-the-good will be banished away from us. And when this one has dried up the spring of the

[32] In KJB we have: Ps. 7: 9: "Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins."; in ROB we have: Ps. 7: 9: "Let the evilness of the sinners come to an end and strengthen the righteous ones, You Who tries the hearts and the entrails, You the righteous God." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[33] Not corresponding to the quoted place.

tears from your heart, he has filled up that spring from under your belly. But received the Lord in your house and He will dry up the last spring and he will clean up the spring of your tears so that to flow out of it the spiritual water[34]. He who wants to come to the fear of God, he will come through persevering waiting[35]. This is for it is said: "Waiting, I have been waiting for the Lord and He has looked at me and he has listened to my ask" (Ps. 39: 2[36]). And what he added to that? - "He has brought me out of the pit of my wickedness and out of the mud" (Ps. 39: 3[37]). And through this pit we also understand the heart's callousness. So, if you have achieved what you desired for, you will be saved by into the Lord.

19. The Answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother, whoa sked the Oldman about the long-patience.

Tell to our brother: I wrote you before, about the long-patience. And now I am telling you: "Behold, I have given you power to step over snakes and shrews and over all the power of the enemy. And nothing will harm you" (Lk. 10: 19). Therefore, you make yourself like Job did by drinking the mockery as one drinks the water" (Job 34: 7). Do these things and be always cogitating at them.

[34] The body gets stronger when the spiritual life gets diminished – whose essence is constituted by the love for Christ, a love that is born out of feeling His presence and the communion with Him. And the full-of-vigor body becomes the source of other sorts of leakages. The heart's tears are the sign that the man is not alone, but he feels Christ our Lord within himself.

[35] He who doesn't wait, patiently, for the Lord, he is agitated. He will forget about fearing the Lord.

[36] In KJB we have: Ps. 40: 1: "I WAITED patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry."; in ROB we have: Ps. 39: 102: "Waiting, I have been waiting for the Lord and He has leaned towards me // He has heard by ask." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[37] In KJB we have: Ps. 40: 2: "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay,"; in ROB we have: Ps. 40: 2: (…, see above) "He has brought me out of the pit of the wickedness and out of the mud." (E. l. t.'s n.)

20. The answer of the same Great Oldman addressed to the same brother, who asked him: If God gave him power to step over snakes and shrews, why would he still get troubled?[38]

He who has received power for stepping over snakes and shrews, he will no longer be harmed by those. So, you search your heart in front of each thing and if that thing still can trouble your heart, even for a little, you will know that you are still far from having received power over those ones, and to you won't be careless lest some instant to be stolen from you[39]. But regardless what thing you see – and I am not telling you here only about the things from within world, which are passing, but either in heavens of on earth – bring it in front of God and let His judgment be in front of your eyes. And think at the fact that we have little time to spend within world. And do so, in order the gentleness to dwell within your heart, by remembering Christ, the without-evilness Lamb; how many he suffered, while being innocent: reproaches, beating, and other things. And we, despite we are guilty for the fact that we start against our neighbor, while our neighbor doesn't' do anything against us? Remember that the love doesn't get haughty, but it manifests long-patience, and the other things (1 Cor. 13: 4). And pray to reach the things in front of you, so that your toil won't be futile. Stick yourself with Christ Who loved us. His to be the glory, forever. Amen.

21. The answer of the same Great Oldman addressed to the same brother, urging him not to command anything to anybody, but to decide as lipid rule to take care only of himself.

Brother, the more things I write to you, the more you must strive to understand the things written to you, and do not disregard them. This is for those things are told towards the knowledge and towards the good-settlement of the soul.

[38] Why doesn't he last in the state of lack of temptations? Why does ne move against that one?

[39] In the Greek text: "Lest the time will go before you", namely not to let is escape from under your mastery even for an instant; in order not to happen to you that what wasn't under your attention. Not to be stolen, by the devil, the time from the moments given to you towards your growth.

Let yourself know, brother, that if somebody cannot stand the reproaches, he won't see the glory, and if somebody doesn't reject the bitterness of the anger, he won't taste the sweetness. You have been appointed in the middle of the brothers and of the things in order you to burn and to be tested. This is for the gold must be tried in fire (1 Pt. 1: 7). Do not keep anything for yourself, because by doing that you will come to war and to worries. But you must judge the things of the time according to the fear of God and do nothing with a spirit of strife (Phil. 2: 3). Do everything you can in order to estrange on yourself from anger and be useful example to everybody, by not judging anybody, neither condemning anyone, but by advising them as on some true brothers. This is for I loved too them who were tempting me. This is for, if we think good things about them, these ones will help us to advance. Do not impose any rule to yourself[40]. Be obedient and humble, and hold yourself accountable about what you have done on each day, for the Prophet by explaining the word "on each day" he said: "And I said: I have started now" (Ps. 76: 10[41])[42]. And Moses says: "And now, Israel" (the Second Law 4: 1). Therefore, you too keep the "now"[43].

And if it is imposed to you the need for commanding something to somebody, you must probe your thought, whether it will move some disturbance. And if your thought doesn't seem beneficial, you will hide your thought under your tongue, by

[40] Do not say: I will forgive that much, or I will obey up to that limit.

[41] In KJB we have: Ps. 77: 10: "And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High."; in ROB we have: Ps. 76: 10: "And I said: Not I have started to understand; this is the change of the right hand of the All-High." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[42] The poet Charles Pegui spoke about "l'éternel commencement". Each time I travel the same road I will think at something else. No moment is like another. Kierkegaard spoke about the novelty of each moment ("der Augenblick"). One can generalize this: the man is always new, for the personal spirit is always new. But the personal spirit will be a truly a new one, when stopes wallowing in his passions.

[43] Do not let any "now" to pass unused. Kierkegaard asked us not to postpone what we are askes to do in this moment, or otherwise we will get accustomed to constantly postpone. Do the good deed required from you by the moment, right on that moment. Reconcile yourself with your brother, while you still are on the way. The whole time and space are imprinted by a moral imperative. The fact that each moment of the time and of the person has its uniqueness, it shows that neither the moments of the time nor the accomplishments of the person are destined to melt down in an indistinct essence, but they will have their prolonged and unique echo as reward or as condemnation in the person's eternity. But we also must see what is inappropriate to do in this moment, so that we should wait for another moment. This is helped by the discernment.

remembering Him Who said: "What would the man benefit if he gained the whole world but he will lose his own soul"" (Mt. 16: 26). Brother, you must learn that every thought that ash within is the renunciation to humbleness, it is not according to God, but it is proven to be from those from the left side. And even if your thoughts seem dressed up in ship skins, they will be unveiled, because of the disturbance they cause, that they are "ravening wolves" (Mt. 7: 15). This is for he says: "Out of their fruits you will know them" (Mt. 7: 16). May God give understanding to all of us, so that we won't be deluded by their justice. This is for "to Him all the things are naked and unveiled" (Hebr. 4: 13).

Therefore, you my beloved one, make everything succeed with your hands, by placing before your eyes your fear of God. And you thank Him. For His is the glory and the honor forever. Amen.

22. The answer of the same Great Oldman addressed to the same brother, full of comforting and or advice, for the brother to turn himself back to the spiritual gladness, by leaving the discouragement caused him by diverse happenings.

Write to brother John a spiritual advice, which to gladden his heart into Christ Jesus our Lord. And tell him: "because you long for us, "like the stag desires the water springs" (Ps. 41: 1[44]) – but not so much as we desire you – and because of no longer being able to endure that, as the godlike Apostle Paul says (1 Thes. 3: 5), I have written to your love these sayings of ours, batter said of God. May your life bring fort grapes, which, when trampled, to produce you the spiritual wine, in order to gladden your troubled soul. May your field bring forth, abundantly, one a hundred, one sixty, and one thirty (Mt. 4: 8). And may your heart be warmed up forever by that fire which our Master Jesus Christ said about: "I have come to throw a fire on earth" (Lk. 12: 49). May the peace of the Lord be mastering your heart, according to the Apostle's word (Col. 3: 15). And may your date-

[44] In KJB we have: Ps. 42: 1: "AS the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."; in ROB we have: Ps. 41: 1: "Like the stag desires the water springs, likewise my soul desires You, God." (E. l. t.'s n.)

palm raise with its branches, according to David who says: "The righteous one will flourish like the date-palm" (Ps. 91: 13[45]). May yourself be cleaned up of your anger and of the wrath of your passions, as the consummate saints are, whom by no means is manifested in the movement of passions, not even an instantly leaning towards any passion. And may your soul be found worthy of dwelling into righteousness and gentleness, so that you will be a good food to Christ, as an innocent lamb. May you be walking on our traces as a sapient descendant, and may you be raised at our canon as a good inheritor of my charismas. May your eyes see God, for you have reached clean in heart (Mt. 5: 8). Be long-patient in your troubles, as one who has known the promise of the Master who says: "Within world, you will have troubles, but dare, for I have defeated the world" (Jn. 16: 33). May you reach the undefeatable love that introduce them who have achieved it in the imperial courts and it make them brothers of Jesus[46]. Suffer together with Christ in order you to be glorified together with Him (Rom. 8: 17). By doing so, you won't disregard the treasure that stays in front of you[47]. But until know you have not known its meaning, or what it is. But when you will have reached the consummate quietude, you will

[45] In KJB we have: Ps. 92: 12: "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon."; in ROB we have: Ps. 91: 12: "The righteous one will flourish like the date-palm and like that cedar from Lebanon will he multiply." (E. l. t.'s n.)
(Editor's note: In text there is no a 27b footnote, but it may be introduced in the next edition of *The Romanian Philokalia*). This is a beautiful application of the idea of food, to us, of the Lamb Christ. Each gentle human being is a truly a nourishment fill of sweetness for his fellow humans. But only united with Christ in His self-sacrifice, the man is able too to become such a gentle lamb, sweet to eat, and thus sweetening the life of the one who eats him.

[46] Jesus has made on Himself our brother, through the love that urged Him to make on Himself man and to receive the death in order to elevate us to the eternal and happy communion with Himself, into the Kingdom where we are going to be sons of the heavenly Father and brothers of Jesus. And the eternal Father created us and He made His Son man, in order to extend His love, the love of a Father, also over other sons of His. We live our brotherhood with Christ and our quality as sons of the heavenly Father, answering that love of Theirs and also by loving ourselves, the people, with Their love. In the Kingdom of God, God will not be a Master of ours, but God will be our Father and our Brother. In the Kingdom of God there will reign the love between God and us, and among all of us as brothers of Christ and sons of the heavenly Father.

[47] The treasure staying in front of us is the love of Christ and all His goods which He gives them to us too. One cannot know this treasure except by reaching the consummate quietude, namely when ceasing to worry about the passing and narrow things of this world. We will reach that love after being able, at our turn, to die to the world that narrows us, us to die for Christ as He dies for us.

know that treasure[48] and you will wonder about the gift from Christ. But how impenetrable are His ways! (Rom. 11: 33). Until you are with the people, you won't be able to understand those ways. But when you are without worries, as we are, then you will understand what I am telling you now. That's why I pray God, day and night (2 Tim. 1: 3), for you too to be there where we are, for you too to be in the same feeling with us, into the untold joy of the saints and into the eternal light, so that you too to find you part in what has been promised to the saints, "into the things which the eye hasn't seen and which the ear hasn't heard, and which haven't ascended to the heart of the man, which God has prepared to them who love Him". Strengthen on yourself, into the Lord; rejoice. Amen.

23. Question of the same brother addressed to the same Great Oldman: Please, Father and Teacher, do not get upset because of me, because of my mistakes, and please give me a canon (a rule) on how I must use the psalmody, the fasting, and the prayer. And please tell me whether I must do differently according to the day.

Answer: Brother, if you paid attention to the words of your asks, you would have the power to understand them. If you reckon me as Father and Teacher, how will you think that I can get upset with you? This is for the Father is lenient and he doesn't allow on himself by any means to be dominated by annoyance, and the Teacher is long-patient and stranger to any annoyance.

And regarding the rule which you have asked me about, many are the ways which one can enter the narrow gate thought, to the eternal resting. Behold, our Lord Christ tells you, briefly, how you must enter. Leave the rules of the people and listen to Him Who says: "he who endures to the end, he will be saved" (Mt. 10: 22). So, if the man is impatient, he won't enter the life. Therefore, do not ask for a commandment, for I do not want you to be under the law, but I want you to be under

[48] Only by dying to the sinful egotism, the man crosses into the infinitely wide life of the love, into the true life. And by feeling that he has everything, the man will no longer be agitated, by peaceful.

the grace[49]. This is for it was said: "To the right one there is no law" (1 Tim. 1: 9). And we want you to be with the righteous ones. Keep the right-reckoning, while steering your ship, as a helmsman, among the waves. When you are sick, keep doing what I have written to you, according to your health condition. And when you are healthy, adapt those also according to your condition. This is because, when the body gets sick, it doesn't' ask food as usually. So, neither in this regard must one keep a certain rule.

And regarding the days, you will have all of them equally holy and good. So, you do all the things wisely and thus you will reach that life into Christ Whom is due the glory forever. Amen.

24. Because a difference of opinion occurred between Abba and him regarding a certain place form the Scripture, and both of them fighting for long-patience, the Oldman sent them this answer which he showed them in that the long-patience is lacking any disturbance. This was in order they to always guard their non-disturbance in a consummate manner.

My beloved son, do not reckon that you understood by yourselves the chapter from yesterday, form the Epistle of Apostle Paul addressed to Thessalonians. That's why I, by knowing the weakness of your patience, or the fact that your patience is mixed with annoyance, I have been praying to God for you to understand this chapter. Of this consists all the meaning of the letters written through you to brother John.

In addition to that, please take heed also at the chapters you are going to read today form the Apostle Paul and from the Holy Gospel, for they have the same meaning. Read those for three times, examining the meanings of their words, for your souly benefit. This is for I bear you very much within my soul and I am taking care of you, according to the will of God. Therefore, strive with me and fight together in order to cut off from you the annoyance and the anger. This is for this is needed for the battle fought with the help from God.

[49] He who believed in Christ, he will receive the grace as power of His love, the grace giving him also the power of that love that I not narrowed by the law. And he who loves, he will be also strong and free and in eternal advancement. Such a person fulfills all the good for the love for Christ, for Christ likes the good. And Christ is the One Who give the man wings of freedom.

Behold these chapters:

From the first one towards Thessalonians, from: "I pray you, brothers, to recognize them who toil among you and who lead you into the Lord" (1 Thes. 5: 13), and until the end of the epistle.

From the first one towards Corinthians, from: "And regarding the spiritual gifts, I do not want you, brothers, to be in nescience: you know that while you were pagans" (1 Cor. 12: 1-2), until: "But I want to speak in the Church five words with my mind, in order to teach others, rather than ten thousand of words with the tongue" (1 Cor. 14: 19).

From the Gospel according to Matthew, from: "Going Jesus out He saw many people and He felt mercy on them and He healed their sick ones" (Mt. 14: 14), until: "And those who were in the ship bowed down before Him, saying: "Verily You are the Son of God" (Mt. 14: 33).

25. The answer of the same one towards the same brother and Abba who suddenly wanted to tighten the rule of the brothers.

I am telling you too, my son, and to the brother too, that I wrote you before, about the long-patience. And I am telling you now too: "squeeze the milk and it will become butter; but if you squeeze the tit with your hand there will come out blood" (Prov. 30: 33). And Saint Paul says: "I have made myself Jew to the Jews in order to gain the Jews" (1 Cor. 9: 20) and so on. Then he says: "I have made myself everything to everybody, that o any way to save some of them" (1 Cor. 9: 22). If somebody wants to bend a three, or a vine, he will bend that gradually and it won't break. But if he pulls it suddenly, the wood will break immediately. You must understand what I am telling you[50].

26. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother who discovered certain things which the Oldman commanded him not to tell anybody about, and that's why he fell into temptation. And about the consummate long-patience.

[50] It is recommended not to be set to the beginners in the spiritual life a too harsh rule.

Tell to our brother: “If somebody doesn’t have the Ghost of Christ, that one won’t be His” (Rom. 8: 9). Take heed where these thoughts came to you from, which ceaselessly upset you. Isn’t that because of your transgression of my command that has become a habit to you? Because I often commanded you not to tell the mystery to anyone, but you instead heralded to many. Am I Christ Who, when He commanded somebody not to talk about certain deed of His, then the word about that deed was heralded to peoples and to everybody (Mt. 7: 36)? Still, the will of Christ is not that of hitting the neighbor, for He has come to save the people with much gentleness and sweetness. This is because if the man doesn’t become like an unimportant little piece, he won’t be able to live together with the people[51]. Look at what Christ says to His disciples: “Not you have been the ones choosing Me, but I have chosen you” (Jn. 15: 16). So, if you ask us with love from God and not from people, you will strive to achieve long-patience[52]. This is for I wrote you yore: “into your patience you will gain your souls” (Lk. 21: 19). Therefore, set another beginning in preserving and in guarding the things I told you[53]. This is for it is not yet the time to unveil those[54]. Be courageous into the Lord!

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[51] Christ has made on Himself to us as an example of delicacy. And the saints are the most resembling to Him. This is the positive power of the humbleness. This gives others the whole freedom in their manifestation. The saint reckons about himself as being an unimportant little piece among others.

[52] If Christ has chosen us, then when somebody chooses us in order to help him with the advice and with the deed, God will be the One choosing us through that person. But that person too must realize this fact and to listen to what we are telling him, for we are chosen through Him by God Himself on his behalf. On this is founded the delicacy of the reports among people and the reciprocal responsibility for one another. God hasn’t chosen us only to be, but He has chosen us to be one for another. I am respecting you, for thought you there is Christ Who appeals me; and you are respecting me, for I have been chosen by Christ on your behalf. I must be patient in listening to your request and in fulfilling your request with responsibility; but you must also be patient in listening to my advices and in responsibly fulfilling them.

[53] Patience means reckoning that each instant is given to us for a new beginning as we wouldn’t have done anything until now. Thus, we can be always new in taking heed at what we are asked on each instant and not to become heavy to listening and to fulfilling the commandment on each instant. We are in an eternal novelty, one that is, in the same time, a ceaseless growth, but we must not present that, proudly, to others. But what we must fulfill on each moment, we can also find that from the advices of our spiritual fathers.

[54] By telling to other too, before the right time, the things you have been recommended to do, you risk make those trivial; you risk those not to be understood by others, because those things are not given for them in their present condition, and they will superfluously perceive those and that will make you reckon those things as less important. You will be able to

27. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother, who got saddened by the fact that the Oldman forgot about writing him, so that the brother thought that the Oldman forgot him.

Write immediately to our brother, by firstly showing my joy, my gladness, and my embracing into the Lord. And tell him: Do not reckon, my beloved one, that I have forgotten to remember you within my heart, because I was late in writing you back. But, by taking heed at your behavior, I have prolonged my patience until now. Be entrusted that, as our God doesn't forget to have mercy on the world, neither I will forget about your love, but I pray to God night and day for the salvation of your soul, in order you to reach the measures which I showed you in the previous letters.

And you must also find out that, when you leave for serving the monastery, there always go with you my heart with the benevolence of God. Therefore, do not discourage yourself, my brother. For I hope you will reach to rejoice of all the things I have written you. This is for God doesn't lie when saying: "he who endures to the end, that one will be saved" (Mt. 10; 22). You think at the things I have told you and at the tasks you have to accomplish. "This is for through many troubles we have to enter the Kingdom of Heavens" (Acts 14: 23). Rejoice, therefore, into the Lord, and I am saying you again: rejoice (Phil. 4: 4). Let no one known your secret. This is for it was written: "And these words seemed to them as a nonsense" (Lk. 24: 11)[55].

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beneficially unveil those things to others after you have grown in fulfilling them, in order to irradiate out of you the force of your consummation which you have been elevated to by practicing the things commanded to you. But also, after the people whom you are telling about those secret things, they have grown up as well, they will be able to fulfill those things at their turn. That's why Christ could tell strong things to others, but He forbid those to further communicate what He told them, before themselves to be elevated to the power of exemplifying those things by their own life.

[55] He urged not to unveil, to the unprepared ones, the secret that one reaches the eternal happiness through troubles, or the of-life-bringer mystery of the cross. "This is because the word of the cross is insanity to the mortals" (1 Cor. 1: 18). The mystery of the suffering that ennobles cannot be understood except by those who have got thinned through spiritual experiences.

This is because if somebody has not a strong heart, he won't be able to bear those[56].

28. He thought to set to himself, as a rule, not to go anywhere during the fasting days, but the Oldman stopped him from doing that, lest, by occurring some need sent by God, him to go out and to get sad as one who has transgressed that rule.

Tell to our brother: Haven't you heard from me that anywhere you will go and anything you will do for God, my heart goes with you? Neither now, my brother, as you heard before, do not set any rule to yourself. And if you leave the monastery when a blessed need occurs, do not get sad in your thoughts. Please understand the meaning of the things written to you by me. And work thus, and you will have resting. Peace to you from me, better said from God[57].

29. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother, by which the Oldman strengthen the brother's faith into the things promised to him, and the Oldman elevates the brother through this entrustment to an even greater zeal.

The resting and all the good gifts and all the godlike charisma come to the man through faith. So, do not be insensitive at the power coming to you on every day, from God, through my humbleness[58]. And find out that we wondered a lot

[56] A strong heart consists of enduring the troubles while remaining in love for those who defame you; a strong heart consists of the perseverance to be sweet to those who give you to drink the cup of the bitterness.

[57] Barsanuphius constantly asked the addressee not to enslave himself to some rule given once for all. But he asked him to work, on each time, as the circumstances will tell him as it is useful. The freedom in good, this is the recommendation. The man must not fence on himself by adopting any rule of a formal repetition.

[58] Every gift from God comes through faith. But this means, in the same time, to believe him who assures you about that gift that will come to you from God. The faith in God doesn't exclude but it actually implied the faith into the man who urges you to faith, especially what that man confirms his sayings with his way of living. Within such a man God is present and working. It is required a great trust into the spiritual fathers.

about your coming to us[59]. So, you must run towards the things from ahead of you, in order "to take those things" (1 Cor. 9: 24). And always remember where God has got you out from. And let's thank God for everything, by praying you to God for Him to fulfill His mercy in all things. Amen.

30. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother, whoa sked him if he should leave, on a ship, with the brothers, in order to find some manual labor in Egypt. The brother was hesitating because both him and the other brothers didn't know the sea and the places.

Tell to our brother: "As long as you are outside, you must toil for God together with your brothers. So, place in front of your eyes the troubles of the Apostles. This is for "he who endures to the end, he will be saved" (Mt. 10: 22), into Christ Jesus our Lord Who it is due the glory forever. Amen.

31. Because of wandering much in Egypt before finding some manual labor to do, and because of enduring many and diverse hardships and troubles, Abba Jon got discouraged. The Oldman foresaw all those things with his ghost, and he prepared, in advance, an answer to Abba John, with the following content:

Write down, my sons, the things I am telling you, better said God is telling them, and prepare them to send them to brother John[60]: in the first place, my salutation to him into the Lord. Then tell him: You are getting discouraged into troubles as a bodily man, as if you haven't heard that troubles are waiting for you as the Ghost told Paul too (Acts 20: 23), while

[59] The addressee asked, as we saw at the beginning of the present Letters, to be permitted to come and live into monastery. That was done by the will of God. He was then serving the monastery by being sent with diverse missions to diverse places.

[60] It is about the same Abba John who cam to monastery and who went to diverse places for the monastery's needs. He was like an administrator of the monastery, who was supervising some works done within the monastery and who was also going out for procuring the things needed by the monastery. He was coordinated by Abba Seric, the hegumen of the monastery. But he was not the same with John the Prophet, the other Oldman, who was also living locked up in his monastic cell. On this Abba John the Great Oldman called him "brother", as he also called Serid as "son".

Paul was comforting those who were with him on that ship, urging them to be in good spirit (Acts 27; 22). "Don't you know that many are the troubles of the righteous"? (Ps. 33: 19[61]) and that in troubles the man is tested as by fire? So, if we are righteous, we will accept to be tested in troubles. And if we are sinners, we will endure the troubles as ones who are worthy of those. This is for the tribulation works (produces) patience. Let's think at all the saints since the beginning and see how many troubles they have been enduring. This is because by doing the good and by speaking the good and by persevering into truth, the saints have been hated by people and persecuted by people until their death, while they have been praying for their enemies and for their persecutors, according to the word of the Savior (Mt. 5: 44). Have you been sold as the righteous Josephus was? Have your hands slaved to baskets (Ps. 80: 6[62])? Have you descended twice in the pit (Genesis 37: 24; 40: 15)? Or, have you been persecuted like Moses was, since his childhood to his old age (Hebr. 11: 25)? What have you endured, you the lazy one? Or, have you been persecuted like David was, by Saul, and by his own son, but he still cried when those ones died (2 Kings[63] 1: 11-27; 18: 33)? Or, have you been thrown into the sea as Jonah was (Jonah 1: 15)? You the forgetful one and our beloved one, why is your thought weakening? Do not fear and do not tremble, like one who lacks his manhood, so that you won't miss the promise of God. Do not be scared like a non-believer, but you must encourage your of-little-faith thoughts. You must love the troubles in all things, so that you to become an experiences son of the saints. Remember Job's patience, and the patience of those who followed to him and you must crave for walking on their traces. Remember the dangers, the troubles, the chains, the hunger, and the multitude of other evil things endured by Paul (2 Cor. 11: 24-27) and you tell to your fear: I am a stranger to you! Remember him who wrote: whether you succeed or not in the work staying in front of you, you must thank God. You must thing that the things are corruptible and

[61] In KJB we have: Ps. 34: 19: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."; in ROB we have: Ps. 33: 18: "Many are the troubles of the righteous and out of all those the Lord will deliver them" (E. l. t.'s n.)

[62] In KJB we have: Ps. 81: 6: "I removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands were delivered from the pots."; in ROB we have: Ps. 80: 5: "I have taken away the burden from on his shoulders, for his hands slaved to baskets." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[63] In KJB we have: 1-2 Samuel, and 1-2 Kings; in ROB we have: 1-4 Kings. (E. l. t.'s n.)

perishable. And the patience according to God will save him who has gained it.

Behold, you are striving to bring some manual labor and to work. In order to show you that, according to Apostles' word, the success doesn't depend "either on him who want or on him who runs, but on God Who has mercy" (Rom. 9: 16), behold that God sends us people who have the things necessary to the world[64]. By receiving those, do not tell them that I spoke something about them, so that they won't fall into the vain-glory[65]. Love them as on some true brothers, and you make your thought to rest their thoughts[66]. This is for they despise the world in order to save their souls. And God brings them through me – for I am writing with foreknowing -, to you, in order you to find out that they despised the world very much. You, therefore, my brother, by being upheld by my hand, you must walk on the narrow and full of troubles path, that one that leads us to Christ Jesus our Lord Who to be the glory forever. Amen.

32. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother, who asked him if he must eat differently and not to go out on Wednesday and on Friday at the Holy Impartation; and whether he must stop from taking care of his work; and whether he must use some healing means if it happened to him to get ill during his ascesis; and he asked for being given commandments for his salvation.

I do not want your love not to know about the benefaction coming to you from the loving-of-people God. This is for, behold,

[64] Are not us who find them who come to God, but God send them to us. And they are converted through God.

[65] I.e. the addressee not to tell to those people who were coming to him, that the Oldman told him something about them, so that they won't imagine about themselves as being very important, and that's why the Oldman spoke about them. It is good that the one who is drawn to faith to know that God d did that, so that he won't fall into the imagination that he is more important than other people. The spiritual life is a continuous oscillation between the contrary realities.

[66] We can rest on one another through thoughts, as we also can disturb on one another. Better said, both the resting and the disturbance always come to some people through other people. So, it is a duty of ours to rest on others, and we owe gratitude to those from around us when they rest us, as also we must feel ourselves guilty when the people next to us are not rested.

the labor pains (of the birth-giving) have reached you[67]. For Jesus has started to work together with you and to bring you, according to the rule, to His blesses peace, to that patience that doesn't get shamed[68]. And even if some weakness or some illness will come upon you, you will direct the whole your hope towards God and you will get resting. This is for I trust my God that you are not far from the way of God.

Regarding the different food you would eat while sitting into your monastic cell, it will be useful and helpful to you. And if there occurs some occasion which you have to eat with your brothers on, do not hesitate, neither eat to much, but gradually narrow your desire.

But do not stop yourself from Impartation as long as you enter and come out, because otherwise you will cause offence to others.

And take heed at doing you sitting in humbleness, and in fear of God, and with non-hypocritical love. Build up your house on hard and steadfast rock; "And the rock if Christ" (1 Cor. 10: 4).

And other commandments aren't necessary to you now. Are enough to you the things written to you, until now, on my behalf. Those are sufficient to bring the former man to the consummate man. You must cogitate at those and remember them and do not forget them. This is for they comprise the whole Scripture. Strengthen on yourself into the Lord, by always preserving the humble-cogitation in words, in deeds, and in movements.

33. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother, because his brother according to the body was thinking to withdraw himself form the monastic life and he asked the Oldman about that through his brother.

[67] The sign of the benefactions coming from God to that man who has started walking on the road to spiritualization, it is that one that troubles have started for him. That means that God trusts the man can endure those troubles.

[68] That peace achieved by the spiritual man against the worldly worries, it actually is the work of Christ, or the work into Christ Who we have everything into. And Christ bring that man to that peace, by dwelling Himself within that man, but not without the man crossing through e patient heroism of the cross, one that implicitly is also in the peace from Christ. The ascesis is Christocentric.

Our Lord Jesu Christ said: "Nobody will come to me if the heavenly Father doesn't attract him", and: "I am going to resurrect him on the judgment day", and: "I will show Myself to him" (Jn. 6: 44; 14: 21). And: "Look at the wheatfields that are white and ready for harvesting and he who harvest will receive payment and he gathers fruits towards the eternal life, in order him to rejoice together with him who reaps and with him who sows". This is for in this is proven the word that "somebody else is him who sows and somebody else is him who reaps" (Jn. 4: 35-37).

Brother, nobody will sleep if he wants to enter the city; and nobody will be lazy when seeing the sun, if he wants to work; but him who wants to enter the city quickens up his steps, instead of waling more slowly; and he who sees the sun starts working fearing of being impeded soon; and he who wants to work his field hurries up not to be his crop harmed by tares. He who has ears to hear, let him hear[69].

34. When the brother came to him for the second time, he was worried about his salvation and he reminded him about the previous promise. And that one asked to be given a sign from the Oldman, about that. And the Oldman told him the followings:

Regarding the brother whom you have told me about, he is warred by faithlessness. And this is the Pharisaic heresy. About these ones the Lord said: "This generation asks for a sign but they won't be given a sign" (Lk. 11: 29). I have nothing to tell him except what the Apostle said: "The old things have passed, behold, everything has been renewed" (2 Cor. 5: 17). And: "Now Israel" (The Second Law 4: 1). And: "Do not tempt your Lord God" (The Second Law 6: 16). And again: "If you hear

[69] He who gets accustomed to postpone, he will escape this habit with difficulty. He who stops climbing, he will fall, in the same instant, lower than he is. Nobody stays except he who ceaselessly climbs. This is an idea developed by Saint Gregory of Nyssa. Stopping because of laziness it will cause a certain palsy to the soul's powers. He who cedes himself to the laziness, he will become laziness's slave, and he will weaken his own freedom or his control over himself. You are yourself when controlling on yourself. In Greek the freedom is also called as self-control (αυτεζουσιον). We could lose a man if we didn't help him when he needed our help. Each instance imposes us a duty for eternity, a duty that you cannot fulfill it in another life. Each moment is given to us, as totally unique, from God. Each moment is important for eternity.

His voice today, you won't harden your heart" (Ps. 94: 8[70]). He who has ears, let him hear[71].

35. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the one who asked him about the brothers who are helpless with their body and about others who are helpless within their thinking: must him take them to himself? And must him tell Abba to ease the beginner a little from taking vigil? And about his long silence.

My brother, the answer to the three thoughts of yours is one: do not force the will of somebody, but you must sow with hope. This is for our Lord forced nobody, but he preached. And if somebody wanted to listen to Him, he listened. I know that you know that I do not disregard or despise your love. But the patience is very useful. This is for when we pray and God is late to listen to us, He does that for our benefit, in order us to get accustomed to the long-patience. So, let's not get discouraged, by saying that we have prayed by God hasn't listened to us. This is for God know what is beneficial to the man. Rejoice into our Lord, my brother, and be worriless in everything. And pray for me, you whom I love, and who are of-one-soul with me[72].

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[70] In KJB we have: Ps. 95: 7-8: "For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. Today if ye will hear his voice, // Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness:"; in ROB we have: Ps. 94: 7-9: "For He is our God and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hands // Oh, if you could hear His voice that says: "Do not harden your hearts, // As in the day of the examining, as in the day of the temptation into wilderness." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[71] Here we have the same idea as in the previous answer. He who ascends, he does that for he hears the voice of the Lord calling him. He who gets accustomed not to pay the due attention to the Lord's commandment immediately when he hears that commandment, and he waits for being told for the second time, namely to be him given a clearer sign, he will gradually lose the sensitiveness of his heart. He will start getting blunt, to getting spiritually sclerotic. He starts to no longer be alive; he starts dying. He falls from the feeling of the godlike plan that makes him free, i.e. the vibrant plan of the Ghost, on that plan of the nature's automatism, and he will stop being himself. Here is being affirmed the importance itself of the "now" and of the "today", the importance of fulfilling in this moment what God asks us. Each moment is given to us in order us to fill it up with the fulfillment of our duty related to it, in order to imprint in it that what God Himself tells us in it, namely what is out duty in that moment.

[72] Persevering in climbing towards God doesn't mean forcing on each moment to fulfill some deed for somebody, or always waiting for the result of a prayer for that person. God wants us to get accustomed to be patient. Sometimes, the continuity of the climbing consists of the continuity of our prayer for others and of not weakening in waiting for the result. The prayer and the patience can uphold, together, the continuous climbing and a ceaseless tension, as a warmth that, if gets cold, it will be rekindled only with much difficulty.

36. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother, which he allows him through, to start his appeasement liberated from all worry; and also, the answer to the thought the brother said it came to him in the last moment; and also, to the question whether he did good by tarried together with some of the Fathers, dialoguing with him.

Brother, listen to me for I love you into Christ. Our Lord Jesus Christ said about the monastic cell: "There comes the time, and it is now, when the dead will hear the voice of the Sn of God and they who will hear they will resurrect. This is for as the Father has life into Himself, so He has given to His Son to have live into Himself" (Jn. 5: 25-26).

And I am telling you that the time of your entrance, with the help of God, it is now, so you must build u your new monastic cell. Enter it, by having God as your guide, and you will dwell into that monastic cell, and you will no longer worried about anything. This is for the need of the things and the temptation uphold on one another. And the thought sown within you is useless, and it even brings with itself the vain-glory, because who doesn't know that we are at the end of the time?[73]

And about dialogues, when you see yourself feeling the urge to speak about God, find out that the silence is mode wonderful and more honored than the speaking[74]. So, there is nothing more you would need me to write you about. This is because I have written you from alpha to omega, as you love knows it well. I am leaving you with God, for His are the help and the mercy. Amen.

[73] Any moment can be our last moment. In this sense, let's think that any hour can be the last hour of our dead-life and the hour of our wakening up from death to life, if we hear the voice of Him Who is able to wake our responsible conscience up, to make us waken, so that us to realize that we exist. And if we do not open the ear of our soul to this voice now, we will get accustomed to never hear it again. So, we will remain forever in death, making out of this moment, on the opposite, our last moment. He who enters the "monastic cell", or the sensitive intimacy with God, by detaching himself from the dead things, he lived in that moment, and he will have been living the whole time he remains in that state, the last hour in a good sense.

[74] God is above word. The main fact is to feel God's presence as an above-word power. And to feel it strongly through the responsibility waken up and upheld by God within you.

37. A certain layman, who loved Christ, he sent a message to be Abba John asked about a thing, and Abba John answered his message. But after that, Abba John felt sorry because of doing that, so that he unveiled what he did to the Great Oldman, telling him: "Forgive me, for I am drunk, and I do not know what I am doing".

I am telling you for many times: "Let the dead to bury their dead" (Lk. 9: 60). Aren't you disgusted still, because of their bad smell? Take heed at what you are saying. This is because you do not know what you are saying. This is because the drunk one is mocked by the people, he is hit, he is despised. He doesn't honor except on himself, he doesn't teach others, he doesn't advise on anything, he doesn't discern between good and evil. If you say one with your mouth but you show something different with your deed, you will speak into nescience. Do not let yourself to be caught by sleep, lest to come, to your ears, suddenly, the shouting: "Behold, the Bridegroom is coming, get out and welcome Him" (Mt. 25: 6), and you to say then: "I am busy". God have made you worriless, but you do not want that. God has taken away from you your worries, but you still entangle on yourself among them. God has rested you, but you want to get tired again. It is the time of the end, for you to weep and to cry for your sins. Remember that Christ told us about that gate that it will be locked (Mt. 25: 10). Horry up, not to remain outside together with the crazy virgins. Remove your thought from this vain world to the age to come. Leave the earthly realities and search for the heavenly realities. Leave the corruptible things and you will find the incorruptible realities. Run away with your thought from the temporary things and you will encounter the eternal realities. Die consummately, in order you to survive consummately into Christ Jesus our Lord[75] Whom is due the glory forever and ever. Amen.

[75] Only him who dies consummately to the former man - to that man who was spiritually dead, and who was tied to the passing things, and submitted to their narrowness, and therefore submitted to all sorts of impediments in his relations with his fellow humans -, only him can enter a life that is: non-narrowed, non-darkened, unimpeded, free and fully communicative, good and generous in the relationships with others, relationships strengthened by the non-narrowed relationship with the Subject of extreme freedom and infinite kindness. Whom has remained sleeping in the chains of the narrow and passing preoccupations, it remains him locked up the gate of the entrance to the life that is nourished out of the of-life-giver food.

38. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother, who wanted to receive from him, more often, answers towards help and towards the salvation of his soul, and who was seeking form finding out if he should dialogue with some of the br0otehrs, or if he should allow to be asked by the brothers concerning their thoughts.

For I know Whom have you entrusted on yourself and what nourishment I have given you, if you took heed at those, I wouldn't need to write you more often. This is for He Whom I have entrusted you knows what you need even before you ask Him. So, do not worry about the things you heard. The lack of any worry brings you nearer to the stronghold[76]. Sand the fact of being overlooked by people will make you inhabit the stronghold[77]. Or, the fact of dying towards any man, it will make you to inherit the stronghold and its treasures[78].

And because you want to hear the same word about some dialogue or about some thought of the brothers, when needed I will tell you what to do. So, do not worry about anything, and take care only for undertaking your trip to the end. I am ceaselessly embracing your love. And on how to quench within you the movement of the too-fiery anger, you can learn from yourself. Peace to you brother and our beloved John.

[76] In the Greek edition: It seems that he called here as stronghold the consummate quietude. See also the answer no. 159.

[77] Another meaning of the stronghold can be the communication with others. He who seeks too much to fulfill his egotistic interests, he will be avoided by others, he will be outside the stronghold. He who is a kind person and who doesn't try to pull everything to himself, he will no longer be feared by others but he will attract them by his gentleness and kindness: "Blessed are the gentle for they will inherit the earth". When the people noisily pay attention to you, the people do that because of fear of because of interest, not because they love you, but in a cunning way. Inwardly they are separated from you. On the opposite, he who is "overlooked" in this sense, he will attract the others to himself.

[78] It is about that death stopping you from searching for people for your interests, for exploiting them in a way or another, in a total insensitiveness. Only when you die to such an interest, you will elicit the people's interest and they will search for you sincerely, for finding comforting in you. Then you will have become alive to them. Then you will have entered the "stronghold".

39. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother who wanted to cut off the dialogues even with his servant, because the Oldman told him that "the lack of worries will bring nearer to the stronghold"; and for he has come to the thought to examine the causes of the diverse temptation which were rising within him.

Tell to our brother: Wait a little longer, for the time hasn't come yet. And I am taking care of you more than you take care of yourself. Better said, God does that. Brother John, do not fear the temptations occurring for testing you. This is for God won't give up on you. When something of this sort comes to you, do not tire yourself trying to find out its causes, but rather call the name of Jesus, saying: "Jesus, help me!". And He will listen to you, for He is near to them who call Him. Do not get discouraged, but run, and you will take into Jesus Christ our Lord Whom the glory to be forever. Amen.

40. The answer of the same Great Oldman: Should him teach his servant the craftsmanship of braiding? And about a brother who asked him about his thoughts, not directly but only hinting at those: did him right (advising that brother)?

The all-luminous teaching of our Savior is this: "You will be done". So, if somebody says this prayer with the whole his heart, he will leave his own will and he will bring everything to God's will. Therefore, teaching your brother is useful, but it can also be a cause for envy. But the work can be done rarely, from time to time, and in this way, it will be covered to the conscience of the brother[79].

Regarding the insinuating question, it has its origin in a self-sparing, one that lack the right-reckoning, and therefore that brother needs many prayers. This is for "the signs are not for believers, but they are for faithless ones" (1 Cor. 4: 22)[80].

[79] Even teaching on somebody can elicit the envy from others, and it can seem contrary to humbleness, and it even can be so. In order to avoid the own temptation and to avoid tempting others, you must teach one as rarely as possible and as covert as possible.

[80] He who doesn't confess clearly his sins and his shortcoming, but he only does that in riddles, he hasn't yet totally defeated his pride, so that he tries to spare on himself. He still wants to hid what he has evil. That's why he needs many prayers in order to get rid of Pride.

41. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother, who fell to many thoughts and worries regarding the monastery's future.

There are many things springing out of your heart. This is for He says: "I will count them up and they will multiply more than the sand" (Ps. 138: 18[81]). Brother, nobody knows where this place will reach, but only the "hearts-knower God" (Acts 15: 8). But He has made it known to me too. You know, therefore, that the Lord won't forsake him, and He will guard him and he will glorify him towards the glory of the name of His glory. His to be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

42. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother, who asked him about the helplessness that came to him, where that could be from; and if he should tell to the brothers who were about to leave for Egypt hos they should take care of themselves, lest they will get into troubled because of not knowing the customs from there.

Tell to our brother: The Egyptians and the Jerusalemite are mixed to you. But do not worry. For God will take care of you. Regarding your though, you must work into the fear of God and do not worry about your brothers. Bu you only pray and the Lord will guide them according to His will in everything. This is for nothing is being done outside God, especially at that place, if it is done into the fear of God and towards the resting and the benefit of the souls.

43. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother, for the brother to consecrate to God everything regarding himself.

Speaking in riddles has its purpose to cover the sinful thoughts towards the faithless ones, but not towards the believers. One can openly tell his sins to the spiritual father.

[81] In KJB we have: Ps. 139: 18: "If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee."; in ROB we have: Ps. 138: 18: "And I am going to count them up and more than the sand they will multiply. I have woken up and I am still with You." (E. l. t.'s n.)

If somebody drinks the water which I have been sending it to you through letters, he won't get thirsty again forever (Jn. 4: 14). And you must wait for and to hope for the resting by your faith into Christ. Take this bread out of my nourishment and be worriless. Do not fear anything, but take your hopes too through the Holy Ghost. You must believe that the hand of God is with you.

44. Out of the blessing sent to you he gave to his servant as well[82], but not out of his own hand for he was not a cleric, but he placed it in front of the servant and the servant took it by himself. And by receiving the blessing for the second time and for the third time, he did the same. And because he did that without approval, he didn't realize that he was mistaking[83]. But when he saw on himself alleviated from passions by the prayers of the Oldman he said: the passions got weakened within me. And after that he sent a message asking about his blasphemy thoughts but he didn't receive any answer. And by wondering himself what could be the cause for that, by the lenience of God, towards correcting him, he saw a fearsome hallucination once, and twice, one that disappeared immediately, and he was filled up with disturbance and he remembered his mistake with the bread. This

[82] It seems that here is about the Holy Impartation. This is for that is the true bread. As it is called as Eucharist, for it has been committed at the Last Supper, by the thanksgiving prayer of our Lord, as well it was called during the first Christian centuries as "Eulogia – Blessing", for was done through the "blessing' from the Lord (to be seen at 1 Cor. 9: 16 – where the blood of our Lord was called as "the cup of the blessing"). And it actually brings us a great blessing of God.

[83] He who has taken the Holy Impartation with himself suffered no harm because he took it from the hand of the priest. But he who took it by himself, he got ill because of not receiving it from the hands of the priest. The priest gives the Holy Impartation for he is the seen image of Christ Who gave the Holi Impartation as the Last Supper. The believer must be aware of the fact that Holy Impartation is not from the priest, or about the fact that he doesn't take the Body of Christ by force, but he received it from Christ Himself, as God and man differing from him and on some kind of godlike plan differing from the human plan: from mediator between God and man. And this human mediation out of godlike sending, it is mediated by the priest. By being invested from above, the priest will somehow become a good conductor of godlike energy. But when he got rid of his troubles by the prayers of the Oldman, he praised that that was due to himself. Consequently, he fell prey to some blasphemer thoughts. It is not clean whether these passions and blasphemy thoughts come to him who allowed his servant to impart himself without a priest, of they came to his servant. It seem that that happened to both of them.

was because he forgot about what he said about the weakening of his passions. And by putting on his head the hat sent to him yore by the Oldman, he fell for many times to the ground and prayer for being found worthy of mercy.

And the Oldman wrote him about the two mistakes of his[84]*. Abd the Oldman wrote him also about the blasphemy thoughts. Then the Oldman told him that by letting the Blessings at the hand of his servant, in order that one to eat them by himself, he didn't do a deed of humbleness but he rather did a deed of pride and he manifested a childish thinking.*

When one knows that he transgressed a commandment he admits that he has known that commandment. And knowing a commandment: it means that he who know it he will correct on himself. But let talk simply: I surrendered you in the hands of God and you deviate from that? But the Scripture says, out of God's mouth, that "the righteous do not deviate" (Prov. 24: 7). Shul I tell you what you are thinking? And the Scripture says again: "Do not let bragging words come out from your mouth" (1 Kings[85]: 2: 3). And did you dare to open your mouth in front of God and say: "My passions have become weaker within me", instead of saying that all your passions lay in you like in a storehouse? That's why you were forsaken for a little while and your mistake were shown to you. And if there had not been not the cover you chose, you would have been exhausted. "But faithful is God Who will not allow us to be tempted over our powers, but He will bring together with the temptation also the escape from it, in order us to be able to endure the temptation" (1 Cor. 10: 13). As about the thing you did inappropriately, because of your desire to brag yourself, namely that of giving the blessing to other like an archbishop, but without having you the ordination as priest, I do not know how to speak about that. Couldn't I send the blessing to everybody instead of sending it only to you?

Behold how you have been punished for bid and many mistakes. Therefore, you should take vigil in order you to destroy the eight sorts[86] and you not to be attracted by childish

[84] About the impartation without the mediation of the priest and about the blasphemy thoughts coming him because he bragged that he got rid of those by himself.
[85] In KJB we have: 1 Samuel.
[86] The eight sorts of passions.

things; and do that in order you to gain manhood and not only naiveness. This is because you have heard for many times: "Do everything with advice" (Prov. 24: 72).

And for all the passions and for all blasphemy pray to God and He will gradually help you.

Take vigil from now on, and guard these within your heart (Lk. 2: 51). And there is no need for somebody to know these, but let pass what happened. May Jesus be with you. Forgive me my past mistakes and I will correct my future things. Forever. Amen.

45. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother, when, having a high fever for several days, not eating and not sleeping, he shouted out against Abba[87] *and against the brothers who were serving him, because he was moved by the work of the devil.*

Brother, why has your heart got sharpened, so that you have forsaken the beloved One and you have chosen the enemy? You have left the voice of Shepherd Christ and you have followed the wolf-devil. What has happened to you? Wha has occurred to you? What is this shouting named by the Apostle with the ugliest names when he said: "Let any shouting and blasphemy and anger perish from you, together with all evilness" (Eph. 4: 31). You haven't suffered anything over your power. This is for the Apostle says: "Faithful is God Who won't allow us to be tempted over our power" (1 Cor. 10: 13). Wake up out of the disturbance of these evil thoughts. Take the staff of the cross which you will chase away the wolved from you, namely the devils[88], and remember you to say; "What are you sad for, my soul, and what are you troubling me for?" (Ps. 41: 6-7[89]). For now on pay attention and do not let yourself to get

[87] Or against hegumen Serid, as was specified in the Greek text.

[88] The staff of the cross is the staff of the victorious patience. This is for, with this staff Christ was victorious as well. Do not allow yourself to be defeated by pride, or by blasphemy, when the suffering comes to you. Preserve your serenity and your kindness. Become even stronger through these ones by the fact that you preserve them even in illness, in hardships, and in troubles brought upon you by others. Only thus you will be able to defeat the enemy.

[89] In KJB we have: Ps. 42: 5: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance."; in ROB we have: Ps. 41: 6-7: "What are you upset for, my soul, and what are you troubling me for? // Hope in God, for I am going to praise Him; the salvation of my face

angry like a mindless and insensible child, for you owe to climb the cross with Christ and you to be nailed with nails and you to be pricked with the spear. Why do you allow yourself, miserable, to shout out against the power of Christ[90] and to curse your brothers? Where do we leave the urge: "In honor you give to one another primacy" (Rom. 12: 10). That's enough. This is for he says: "Give occasion to the wiseman and he will become even wiser" (Prov. 9: 9). Suffer and remain peaceful and give thanks in everything. This is for he says: "Give thanks in everything" (1 Thes. 5: 18). It is obvious that also "in tribulations, in troubles, in illnesses, and in moments of ease" (2 Cor. 6: 4). So, you keep God and God will remain with you. For Him is due the glory forever. Amen.

46. After he got better and healed of his illness and after he crossed through those temptations, the enemy showed him some evil dreams in order to trouble him again. But because of not succeeding in that, the enemy showed him also a monastery and a church and many people running there in order to, allegedly, find help. In order to strengthen him, the Oldman wrote him the followings:

"Glory into the highest, to God" (Lk. 2: 14) brother, our enemy, the devil, has started "roaring like a lion" (1 Pt. 5: 14) to swallow you. But he was not allowed to do that by the shielding hand of God. So, when the enemy saw that he is not allowed to do what he wanted, he started troubling your mind and he brought you some filthy dreams. And, full of evilness in his cunningness, when he saw that God doesn't allow you to be tempted to the end, neither over your power, he made you see a church and a monastery, allegedly for your help. Therefore, you must put your heart in a safe place, by sealing your heat into non-disturbance in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost[91]. And I believe that He will help us to step on

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is my God." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[90] He who shouts out, when in troubles, at others, he actually shouts out against the power shown by Christ on the cross. This is for Christ showed His power by suffering and by rebuking nobody.

[91] This seal is, obviously, the sign of the cross. This is for this sign we imprint it within us in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Thus, we show whom we belong to, by the seal imprinted within us. And the enemy will no longer have the courage to

the head of our enemy (Gen. 3: 15). You must achieve, therefore, a humble heart and give thanks to God who has saved you from the trap of the devil. This is because you have suffered that because of your carelessness.

47. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother, because of the brother feel into the very hard – and to many non-understood – war of the thoughts.

Tell to our brother John: I wonder, my beloved one, that you do not understand these things. This is because I, by seeing your many troubles, I have been sending you blessings, for many times, in order you to take power through them, from God. But you must always think at the Psalm 107[92], that says: "He said, and there was a blow of blizzard, and his waves stirred up; he ascends to heavens and he descends to deeps". And again: "Their soul gets melted down into evilness" (Ps. 106: 25-26[93]). These things have come over us and we must endure such dangers, until we will have reached "the shore of His will" (Ps. 106: 30[94]), as I wrote you before. This is because, once God has surrendered you in the hands of your enemies, do not surrender yourself too in their hands. And if you do this, God neither will surrender you in their hands[95].

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come close to us, and to try and steal us form our Master Who is the Almighty God. in the cross as seal are imprinted the Persons of the Holy Trinity. We must do this on each time when we feel the tempter stalking us. We belong to God in Trinity Who accepted that One of Trinity to suffer, with the victorious patience, the cross on our behalf, and so he has strengthened the humanity he assumed in an endless freedom from all the pains and pleasures, from all helplessness that entered our nature by sin.

[92] In KJB we have: Ps. 108.

[93] In KJB we have: Ps. 107: 25-26: "For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. // They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble."; in ROB we have: Ps. 106: 25-26: "He said and a stormy wind started and the waves of the sea raised // And they went up to the skies and they descended into deeps, and their soul in dangers got petrified." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[94] In KJB we have: Ps. 107.

[95] "To the shore of His will". It is that state which we won't want to be done in anything according to our will, but we will want everything to be done according to God's will. That is the state which we are going to want in what God wants, and we are going to understand that what God wants is the best for us; in that state we will no longer be slaves to our "will". That will be our full freedom. This is for, actually, the will of God is that what corresponds to our true nature. Our will that is contrary to God's will it is that by which we want that which is not towards our true freedom. By that will we do not truly want freely. That will is not actually our will, but it is the will of some contrary forces which enslave us. But when we

And if you want yourself to be delivered from troubles, and if you want yourself not to be drought down by troubles, you will expect even greater troubles to come upon you and so you will find resting[96]. Remember Job and the saints from after him, how many troubles they endured, and achieve their patience and your ghost will be comforted. Encourage on yourself, and be strong, and pray for me, by reminding my words and your soul (in the Greek version: my soul) will be renewed.

48. Abba, invoking a certain motif, he was late in bringing the answer to that brother mentioned before. That brough to that one a harsh rebuking, and that caused him deep sadness. And the brothers who were serving him because of his helplessness, by telling him about things committing in the monastery, usefully and uselessly, that one, instead of rebuking them and thus to correct them for such a gossiping, he told that neither him would those things be pleasant. And Abba telling him later that he did those according to the advice of the Oldman, that one told him: "The Oldman let you working according to your own will". The Oldman send the following answer to all of those, showing him that the things seemingly did wrong they actually were done good, for they have been committed out of an oikonomia that is above our understanding.

Behold that, after a while, our love entices us to hit again with the staff of Christ, towards rebuking and correcting, in order to be accomplished with us the written word that says: "More trustworthy are the wounds of the friend" and the others (Prov. 27: 6). So, if we rebuke you, you won't be discouraged, by remembering the proved that says: "My Son, do not get discouraged by the rebuking from the Lord, neither get you

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know what the will of God is, and when we work according to God's will, we are peaceful like during a fasting period, and we will be so after that period too.

[96] By expecting even bigger troubles that the present ones you will feel the present ones as light and by that you will feel on yourself as above them, and therefore rested too. The freedom and the resting are inseparable. But one cannot reach this state by searching for comfort. This is for the comfort too it enslaves us to laziness, and it makes us, in the same time, insensitive in an egotistic manner. We got humanized not by avoiding the troubles, but by enduring them. This is, in the same time, the true comforting from the Holy Ghost Who will comfort our ghost. This is the true resting.

weakened because of His rebuking. This is for the Lord rebukes and beats every son that received Him" (Hebr. 12¨5; Prov. 3: 11-12). Therefore you, even if I am rebuking you, you know what the Apostle says: "Reproach, rebuke, comfort" (2 Tim. 4: 2).

Where is your mind, you hypocrite? Or, where is your thought tarrying, you lazy? Why the masters of your mind resist within you against the disciples of the Master, so that your mind not to be taken and used by the Master to climb in towards entering to Jerusalem (Lk. 19: 33-35) and so to get out the sellers and the buyers out of the temple of God and to shame up the scribes and the Pharisee[97]? Why, despite you must live in Jerusalem, they drag you to Babylon? Why, by leaving the water of Siloam (Isa. 8: 6), you still want to drink the mirky waters of the Egyptians? Why are you deviating from the way of the humbleness that says: "Who am I? Dust and ashes" (Gen. 18: 27) and you want instead to walk the twisted and full of troubles and of dangers way? Where have you thrown my words which I have been telling you night and day? Where is the target which I am telling you as I would tell that to myself, you to reach, and where do you see that you have reached at? Where do you want to be and where are you at, because you have an uncontrolled tongue and you untie it quickly[98]? And if you say that your neighbor is right, why don't you strive to understand that we must reckon as right especially him who, according to God, he covers us and put his neck for us[99]? We must thank him and we must pray for him, in order him to be sheltered against any evil, for the benefit of the many, as the Apostle teaches us. This is for, the Apostles thanked to some people, saying: "Who put their necks for me" (Rom. 16: 14).

Don't you remember all of these? Don't you remember the lack of worries bestowed you by God through him? Don't you

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[97] The disciples of the Lord want to make out of any mind (in Greek mind is of masculine gender = νους) a gentle donkey, so that the Lord to mount it and to enter the Upper-Jerusalem riding it, and so the mind to be imparted with the glory of the Lord. Our Lord doesn't want to enter the heavenly Jerusalem without us. Our Lord embodied on Himself for turning Himself to heavens as man, together with us, while us allow Him to lead us and while we served Him as well. Our mind must not remain to nobody as a feral donkey.

[98] Note to the Greek text: Without guarding, without attention, you speak without thinking and in a hurry.

[99] The gossipers said about one another that they were right, and not the leader of the community who was bearing the burden of the worries on behalf of them. Putting the neck for somebody means to take upon himself any burden on behalf of others, as also one who was ready to give his life for others.

remember the chair you are shared with, in peace, like an emperor? It is not him who bears the burden of those who come to us and who leave from us, while we remain untroubled? This is for, if they come for us, we will be the one who should take care of them, and not him. Therefore, we owe to give God many thanks, for God have given us a true son, according to our soul, as he wanted. And instead of these, you told him, stupidly: "I wash my hands regarding you". And you did that not once, but for many times, so that his soul has been sunk in much grief. And you didn't remember the word of the Apostle who says: "In order not to be one like this one overwhelmed by too much sadness" (2 Cor. 2: 7). This is for, if there wasn't the hand of God and the prayer of his Fathers, his heart would be torn apart within him.

Where are my commandments which I have given to you, which I have said you: "Cry, weep, do not seek for being noticed, and do not value on yourself in any regard. Have I attracted your love on another way? Since now, remove yourself from the world. Climb the cross[100]. Detach yourself from earth. Shake off the dust from your feet[101]. Despise the shame[102]. Do not let yourself to be trapped in the Chaldeans' oven, lets you will be burnt, together with those, by the anger of God. Reckon any man as superior to you[103]. Cry for your dead (Joshua Sirach 8: 10[104])[105]. Remove your beam (Mt. 7: 5). Build your ruined house. Hout out: "Have mercy on me, Son of David, so I can see" (Lk. 18: 38-41). Learn that "every moth will be shut" (Rom.

[100] He who climbs the cross, he has liberated himself from the world. He has become truly free; he has entered another existence plan, that plan of the of the freedom, that plan of the Ghost, that plann0of his love for God and for people, so that he has exited the world of the egotisms.

[101] Shake off the dust that keeps you glued to the earth and that impeded you from flying in the sky of the freedom and of God Who is enslaved by nothing, the sky of the disinterested love.

[102] Despise that what the people reckon, by a judgment contrary to truth, as shame.

[103] By reckoning any man as superior to you, you will have gained the true superiority. You will no longer be dominated by your desire to be superior, to seek for being recognized as superior. This is the height of Christ's kenosis, and of our humbleness. "He who humbles on himself, he will be raised".

[104] Cry for the dead near to you; think at the fact that your will die too. But you also cry for yourself, if you are dead, in order you to resurrect.

[105] This book is missing from KJB. The interested reader can find and download freely, the fourteen books which are missing from KJB but which are given in ROB, in English translation, bearing the title *Bible Missing Texts*, on www.academia.edu.

3: 19) and do not speak haughtily[106]. "Close your door" (Isa. 26: 20) to your enemy. Keep your word in yoke and lock up your door.

You know what I am talking to you. Think at the things I have said to you. Force yourself to understand those words, and you will find the worthy of God fruits comprised in those words. And do not feel shame for my grey hair, for I am praying for you day and night. May God give you to understand and to understand those words in His fear. Amen.

And because you told him: "The Oldman allowed you to do your will", The judgment uttered by our Lord through the prophet it is directed upon me: "Amen, I say to you, that if you see your brother walking a way that is not good, and you won't show him that that way if not good, his blood will be asked from your hands" (Ezra 3: 18). Do not take this in derision, but you must believe the Apostle who says that we are going to be held accountable for our neighbor. But you do not understand what is happening.

49. Thanking to the Oldman for guidance, he asked him to write him for many times, about the salvation of the soul. Also, about the thought that he wanted to tell it to Abba, but he asked the Oldman to tell that to Abba.

Brother John: I do not know what this is. I have been writing you from alpha to omega, from the state of the beginner to the state of the consummate, from the disrobing of the former man, together with that one's lusts, to the burial of the new man, that one built according to God, from the estrangement in the land of the senses to that state of the heaven's citizen and inheritor of the intelligible land the Gospels. Ruminate the Epistles and you will be saved. This is for you will have in Epistles, if you understand them, both the New and the Old Testaments, and if you understand them, you won't need any other book. Shake off the forgetfulness and get away from darkness, in order the peace to come and dwell within your hear and within your senses; and all of these will come to you. Let the smoke of the idolater sacrifices to scatter away from

[106] Every mouth will remain shut when everybody will be exposed as guilty. The bragger, or him who reckons on himself as being good, he is the one speaking the most.

your intelligible Nineveh, and in your intelligible Nineveh's marketplaces it will be spread the fragrance of the incense of the spiritual repentance, and that will stop the anger that menaces it with the destruction. Why are you sleeping? Why have you placed under your head, as a pillow, not only the answers regarding your own salvation, but also the answers regarding the salvations of the brothers who would study them faithfully? Stop dreaming now. Wake up from the heavy sleeping. Love your feet. Enter Segor so that you won't be caught by the destruction of the five cities. Do not turn yourself to the things from past, in order not to become a pillar of salt (Gen. 19: 22-26)[107]. Make yourself wise like the snake is, so that your enemies won't deceive you, and make yourself innocent like the pigeons are, so that you won't be warred up by the ghost of the revenge (Mt. 10: 16). Make yourself true servant of the Master, or otherwise you will be enslaved by many[108]. Do not separate yourself from Him, because only the worthless makes such a decision (1 Cor. 7: 15). See how you are and tell to yourself: what am I like this, what will I gain by being like this? And the loving-of-people God will enlighten your heart, so that you will be able to understand. Behold, God has made you free of all earthly worries. Take heed at yourself where you are and what you want, and God will help you in all things, my brother.

Regarding about your thought which you want me to tell him, I could do that myself, but if you do not tell that by yourself, you will estrange on yourself from the consummate love that you feel for him[109]. If your soul is one, and if your hear this one, according to the Scripture (Acts 4: 32), nobody hides

[107] Motionless and fruitless salt-pillar becomes everyone who do not ceaselessly move forwards, but he reaming fixed into the things from his past, in the same monotonous sins of his. Those sins bewitch him, and they constantly call him to them. He cannot part with those sins of his. That one remains a pitiful monument of his spiritual death.

[108] He who becomes servant of God, he will escape any other slavery. God makes us free from all power which are inferior to our ghost, inferior power which otherwise will enslave our ghost, but when our ghost is sovereign, he makes ourselves sovereigns as well. We have escaped from the slavery of the passions which are themselves mastered by the decayed and automatic forces of the nature. But only God Who is consummately free Ghost, only Him can strengthen our ghost too, and therefore our freedom as well (2 Cor. 3: 17). God keeps us attached to him through the love we feel for Him and which we grant Him joyfully, for he comforts us with His love.

[109] It seems to be about the same John who prayer the Oldman to tell Abba Serid a thought of his.

anything to his heart[110]. Make yourself sapient, you who are heavy in heart. May our Lord forgive you!

50. Of the same Great Oldman towards the one who asked him if he must no longer meet anybody starting from the Blessed Week.

After the feast, you will appease on yourself (stay in isolation) for five days a week, and then for two days meet your brothers if there occurs any need. And I am telling you what to do further on. Use the whole your power so that you to be worriless. This is for God takes care of any man according to what is beneficial to that man, either than man repents in his heart, or he keeps his heart awake by doing something else beneficial to him.

51. After the feast, there came a bishop who asked to meet him, and some brothers came to ask him about their thoughts. That's why he sent a message asking the Oldman what to do about those.

You know that I haven't ever placed any tie upon somebody, neither upon ourselves. And because I told you: appease on yourself for five days a week and for two days meet your brothers, do not worry in this regard either. And for I say: meet them, when you meet them do not be worried about what will you say or about what will you speak. This is for Christ said: "The Ghost of roue Father speaks within you" (Mt. 10: 20). And relatedly to the brother whom you have told me about, do not reject them, when the need asks for receiving them, and God will help you. Amen.

[110] The hearts of those who love on one another are one, and their souls are one, meaning that both must be of one heart and of one soul, as Barsanuphius often says. They souls and their hearts are one, for they feel good things (σμοουσαιοζ). And when the love on one another, their feeling is common to both of them, though it is lived by two persons.

52. Answer of the same Oldman towards the same brother, who asked him about the disorder from within world.

Brother, let's take heed at ourselves, for all the things have become mirky. And let's get accustomed to be silent. And if you want to rest on yourself, you will make on yourself as dead towards any man and you will find resting. Understand that I am telling you to rest on yourself in peace, regarding your thoughts and your work and all of your worries.

53. After this answer he tried to consummately cut off any dialogue. And a brother was very sad because of that. And that brother was asking him to talk to him if there was any need. And, because he had mercy on that brother, he promised that. And that brother asked him about that and about the coat sent him by a certain brother, if he must accept it or not.

Brother, I sent you word: Be worriless, what do you want more from me? Take heed at yourself. "The harvest is plenty" (Mt. 9: 37). Do not leave the harvesting for gathering the wheat grains fell behind the reaper. Leave all of those and occupy on yourself with the harvesting and with the gathering, so that you will have all the fruits of the wheat and of the vine, so that your heat will be strengthened and gladdened into the Lord. Read again the letters I wrote to you before, for they are not useless. And relatedly to that coat, if the brother wants you to have it, with the whole his heart, you will receive it, but by reckoning on yourself as worthless.

54. A brother, because of having a very harsh war, and because of being impeded to unveil that war to Abba, due to his shame, he sent word to the same Aba John to receive him without Abba being aware of that, and to listen to his thought. This one was tormented because of two motives: he didn't want to receive that brother without approval, but neither he wanted to make that brother sad. And because of not knowing what to do, he asked in his ghost, on the same Abba, if he had to open his door to that brother.

Tell to your brother: Who is so mindless to choose to himself the most damaging thing that causes him a greater trouble, and not the easy to endure things, with humbleness and prayer? Do not open your door to your brother. This is because not in the locking up the door consists the killing, but in locking up your mouth. I embrace you with holy kiss.

55. A certain Egyptian Father came to live in the monastery where the Fathers were, and he wrote in Egyptian, to the Great Oldman – for that one was Egyptian too – asking him for prayer and for telling him a word for the salvation of his soul; and he asked also if he can be found worthy of having a discussion with him. But the Oldman wrote him the following answer in Greek:

Because I have decided not to write myself to anybody, but I am sending my answer through Abba, that's why I haven't written you in Egyptian, but I have imposed myself to tell him to write to you in Greek. This is because he doesn't know Egyptian. If in your letter you reckon me as your Father all-beloved into the Lord, and for you reckon me as knowing the needs, the tribulations, and the dangers of the soul, if I am your Father as you have written me, I am commanding you not to disturb me anymore by asking me for having a discussion. This is for I do not discern among people as long as I live. That's why, if I open my door to you, I will be compelled to open it to everybody. And if I do not open my door to you, I won't open it to anybody.

I have written you this, for you have written me, saying: "Make me worthy of your gentleness and have mercy on my troubled soul". And because you also say in your epistle: "My sin separated me from you, my master", I am telling you that by the grace of Christ, Son of God, I haven't separated on myself from you, but I am always together with your love in ghost. And for you have written me in the same epistle: "I beg you pray for my sins", I am telling you the same" Pray for my sins". This is for the Lord says: "As you want the people to do to you, you do likewise to them" (Mt. 7: 12). And I, despite being the most

wicked among people, I am doing what I can for him who said: "Pray for one another, in order you to be healed" (Jas. 5: 16)[111].

Brother, we are strangers, let's make on ourselves like strangers and let's do not value on ourselves in any regard; and so, nobody will notice us and we will have rest[112]. And if you have entered to us, fight for enduring. This is for He says: "he who endure to the end, he will be saved" (Mt. 10: 22)[113]. I everything, you fight for dying towards any man and you will be saved[114]. And tell to your thought: "I have died and I am lying into my tomb".

Believe me, brother, that I have exceeded my measure by being forced by my love for God, and so I have told you these things to your love. This is because whom am I the all-unimportant[115]? That's why, by asking for forgiveness, I am saying you: forgive me, the much-speaking, for the Lord. And pray for me, you the servant of the God of Abraham.

56. Of the same Oldman towards Abba Paul, the Oldman who live in quietude and who wanted to take to himself a brother who was blind and to serve him.

Brother Paul, there is a proverb saying: "When you see a young man running, you will know that there is an old man

[111] Each one will be healed of the sin of the envy, by praying for one another, but by doing so he will also heal on another, for he feels within him the one who is praying for himself and so he will defat his passion.

[112] We are strangers to the world by our ghost, and by our aspiration to part with the world we will become strangers to the world, by our will. If nobody notices you, do not get troubled. And so, you will get appeases into your ghost. Let's make on ourselves strangers also from those who tempt us to search for being appreciated and understood by others. This is for only this will provide us with the resting from the thirst for searching for being appreciated by others.

[113] He who has endured to the end, he shows that he hasn't allowed on himself to be overwhelmed by any hardship and by any temptation to get rid of any hardship. He has fully gained his struggle for his freedom, which he has united himself in with the Holy Ghost Who is the Ghost of the freedom.

[114] You fight for you to die to the death, to die to what makes you dead, namely to everything than enslaves; you fight in order to open yourself to the generous life, and for out to be elevated in the free broadness of the true life.

[115] I have exceeded my measure by advising you to do what myself haven't reached yet to do. BY doing so, I have mistaken and I ask you for forgiveness. This is for, you whom I have advised, you are better than I am. But I have done that out of love for you. But the love doesn't belong to be but to God. We have here an intertwining of paradoxes that expresses, with a great delicacy, the great care for him who asked to be advised.

who stirs him up". To us, the old man stirring up is satan. Out of his envy, he wants to push us to bad days, while seeming to us that we work for righteousness. And we do not think at the fact that many, by wanting to get others out of a river, themselves got drowned together with those ones. See when he wants to catch you in a trap. And when you ask and receive answer, he will use another more cunning trap (another deceit), that is over your power[116]. God doesn't ask you to do good to your neighbor, above your power. For he says: "Do not cease to do good to your neighbor, according to your power" (Prov. 3: 27). There has come the blind. But you too are very sick. Who is going to serve both you and the blind? And he who always places in front of you these images of the righteousness, he will always tell you: Behold, you have brought a burden in monastery. And, as you know, the man I s a being who doesn't endure easily, as the Scripture says: "Who will suffer a man, especially one old and discouraged?" (Prov. 18: 14).

If you must taste those days, do what you want. If I wasn't asked, I shouldn't speak. And the things I have said, I have said them for the love of Christ, in order my brother not to be deceived. But if you commiserate with him for God, and if you strongly think that God will help you, pray God and God will do with the blind as he wills. I haven't bonded you, brothers, neither have I given you a command. So, do as you wish. And forgive me for the Lord, and pray for me the all-unimportant.

[116] Often, satan urged somebody to do something, by deceiving him that thus he would work for advancing into righteousness, namely into consummation. After Abba Paul got rid of many deceits from satan, by asking and by receiving answers from the Great Oldman, what was him to do in those situations, the enemy has come now with an even more cunning trap: with the urge him to receive and to take care of a blind, thought he was an old man as well.

The old man realized the difficulty for giving the right advice in such a situation. He would not want to impede Abba Paul from doing a good deed, but he also showed Abba Paul the difficult top bear burden that he wanted to take it upon himself, thought he was old and ill. The last decision belonged to Abba Paul who according to the power he knew that he had for enduring the hardships coming after taking the blind man to live together with himself, a knowledge that actually was one with the faith he had in the help he followed to receive from God. But if he had taken the blind, he would have added to them who were serving him to serve that blind man too. And he followed to always here in his thought the reproach: "Behold, you have brought one more burden to the monastery".

57. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother, who move a word towards somebody about faith and he was not able to win that dispute and that's why he got disturbed because of that opposition.

The godlike Apostle, moved by the Holy Ghost, he said "Faithful is God Who won't let you to be tempted more than you can endure, and He will make, together with the temptation, also its end, so that you will be able to endure it" (1 Cor. 10: 13). My brother, you who are of one soul with me and whom I truly love, be entrusted that God, by seeing the grief and the disturbance that have come upon you because of the temptation you are experiencing, I felt a bigger pain that ever before. And I reminded the Apostle who says: "Who is weak and I won't be weak too? Who is offended and I won't burn myself too?" (2 Cor. 11; 29). And again: "If a limb suffers, all limbs suffer together with it" (1 Cor. 12: 26). This is for, despite I am not doing the things of the Apostle, I still have heard him saying that he cries together with them who cry, and he rejoices together with them who rejoice (Rom. 12: 15).

But, glory to All-High God Who hasn't promised to your enemy to allow him do the whole evilness and the whole enemy's will upon you. This is for the enemy wants to swallow all the living people, as the Coryphée of the Apostles, Peter, confessed, by saying that the enemy "roars like a lion searching whom to swallow" (1 Pt. 5: 8).

Master of mine, make us not always quickly receive the disturbance from the evil thoughts which urge us to go against our neighbor with disturbance. This is because that is out of the devil's work and nothing else. And where have we left the work: "Blessed in him who endures the temptation, for he becomes experienced" (Jas. 1: 12)?

But I have written these words to your love not because you would need to be taught. This is for, if you study the Scriptures, you will see and you will get wiser than I am. This is because I am a wicked and a helpless and I have nothing but an empty name. But I have written you due to the pain of my heart and out of an abundant love that I have towards God "with may tears" (2 Cor. 2: 4). So, may Him support your heart into His fear, "He Who strengthened the sky and placed it" Isa. 42: 5). May Him found your being on the hard rock (Mt. 7: 24), "Him

Who founded the earth upon waters" (Ps. 136: 6[117]). And may Him rebuke your tempters (your pirates), He who rebuked the winds and the sea (Mt. 8: 26). May Him remove from you the forgetfulness of the commandments, Him Who put the distance between dawns and dusks (Ps. 102: 12[118]). May your soul receive mercy "as a father has mercy on his sons" (Ps. 102: 13[119]). And may your heart be enlightened by Him Who enlightened the realities which were darkened before. And may Him give you patience do dwell with me, whom you love in peace to the last of your breath, as it was shown, in advance, through His grace for he said: "he who will endure to the end, he will be saved" (Mt. 10: 22[120]). And may Him give you peace among yourselves, that peace that He gave it to His disciples (Jn. 14: 27). And may Him give you to reach His consummate love, Him Who said: "If you love Me you will keep My commandments" (Jn. 14: 15); or again: "By this all of them will know you that you are my Disciples, for you will have love among yourselves (Jn. 13: 35). If we have this love, nothing would separate us from one another, until our death.

This is for it was written: "And now Israel" (The Second Law 4: 1). And again: "If the ghost of him who masters comes upon you, do won't leave your place" (Eccl. 10: 4)[121]. I am telling you that word from Ruth: "May not be to me I to separate

[117] The content doesn't correspond. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[118] In KJB we have: Ps. 103: 12: "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."; in ROB we have: Ps. 102: 12: "As far thew dawns are from dusks, so far you have removed from us our lawlessness." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[119] In KJB we have: Ps. 103: 12: "Like as a father **pitieth** his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."; in ROB we have: Ps. 102: 13: "Like the father has mercy on his sons, so the Lord have mercy on them who feared Him." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[120] This is for that one will gain the ultimate victory, and he will affirm his freedom in the last instant of his life submitted to temptations and to trials, and so will remain free forever, namely united with God.

[121] Only satan wants to be master, meaning that he wants to master upon people, by enslaving them. God is Lord and Emperor by love, by making the man free, and by giving the mans the power to love Him, free of any passions. Though this, God give the man the power to overcome "the master of the world", by becoming himself master. To the man who is free of satan, the world will become the ambience of the freedom of God and of the freedom of the man. The man must liberate on himself from the slavery to the world (to the satan from the world), but he must not despise the world. The world can make the man see God through itself, and to meet God. Only satan makes the world do dominate the man. Or, only satan masters upon man through world. The world will become to man transparent for God, when the man lives the unmediated relationship with God through the world. In this sense, satan lowers the world and it makes the world his instrument for mastering upon the man. Sant in, in last analysis, the master of the world for that man who obeys satan through sin.

myself from you. Only the death will be between me and you" (Ruth 1: 16-17).

But if you allow to yourself to be shaken by these, I will be totally not guilty, you will see and you will answer on that fearful day. This is for I gladly put my soul to death your you, my brother. Without be it a commandment, I am telling you: Live in quietude with conviction, wondering about God Who has delivered you of great dangers and troubles and all sorts of temptations; and glorify Him. Him to be the glory. Amen. Forgive me, for I have been speaking to much. Because I have prolonged the word because of much sadness and for great joy.

58. By receiving the answer, that brother sent back this word: Master, Lord please forgive me for the Lord and pray for me because I know that my sadness and my disturbance are from the devil. But you know, master, that I received the faith into the 318 bearers of God Fathers, when I was a child. And I have never received any other teaching except that. But I am troubled. So, if you know that I am disturbed, Father, assure me that the Lord will say a good word for me to God and so I won't suffer any loss. If you do that, my sadness and my disturbance will cease. This is for I am awfully tormented by those. This is because I am stupid and full of craziness and tormented for my many sins. So, do not be against me, Master. But write me my pardon. And help me regarding those in your well-received prayers. And I believe in God that you will gain my wicked soul.

Answer: (V. 59) If you cogitated at the things written to you by me, you would find out if I wrote those from myself. This is for my saying that I put my soul for you, it is interpreted like: I put a word for defense, for your love. This is for I am not ashamed to tell you, my brother, that you cannot understand the realities of the faith. Therefore, by not being you able to do that, do not examine those. Because, otherwise, you will attract upon yourself sadness and disturbance. But the believer, even if he speaks to heretics or to unbelievers, or if he resists them, he won't be ever disturbed. This is for he has Christ within him, he has the Chieftain of the peace and of the quietude within him (Isa. 9: 6). And one like this, by peacefully resisting, and with

love, he can even bring many heretics of unbelievers to the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore you, brother, because examining these things exceed your power, you will keep the imperial way, namely the faith of the 318 Fathers[122], which you have been baptized in. This is for this faith have all the things as it should for those who understand what is consummate. So, you will live in quietude taking heed at your sins and at the way you will answer to God. And if you observe my commandment thus, better said the commandment of God, I am confessing that I will put a defense word for you: "that day which God will judge on the hidden things of the people" (Rom. 2: 16)[123]. Therefore, do not hesitate, because that will bring you to even worse things. This is because the sweet things will be turned towards bitterness by the enemy whom will be firstly defeated by Lord Jesus[124]. Do not be worried about other things. This is for the Lord has removed the worry from you[125]. But the evil demon, by seeing that you have been delivered through the prayers of the saints, he tried to leave with you a part of smoke of these temptations.

Pray for me, brother, so that I won't be told too: "You who teach another, why don't you teach yourself?" (Rom. 2: 21). Therefore, do not stumble yourself in these things again, for you will make sad me whom you love. May the Lord cover you under His wings. Amen.

59 (V. 151) A certain old man, Abba Euthimios, he sent this prayer to the Great Oldman, so that God could answer him to the questions he wrote in that prayer: You the Life-Giver, You the path of the ones who are in darkness, You enlighten us who are in the fog, for You the Holy have said: "Ask for and you will take (Jn. 16: 24). Knock and it will be open to you" (Mt. 7: 7). And for

[122] The faith of the Father from Nicaea.

[123] They who exposed their hidden sins in front of their confessor and who have been forgiven by their confessor in the name of God, they won't be ashamed by those sins at the final judgment. This is for those sins won't be exposed for the first time, and those sins have been detached from them by confessing them.

[124] Saint Maximos the Confessor sys that the sweet thing will become bitter, or pains. Here is blamed the devil for that.

[125] Once He assured us about the eternal life, why would we benefit by bearing so many worries, especially by knowing that those worries impede us from achieving that eternal life.

you want to open the door to us too, please hurry up. This is for You have started. This is for, if You didn't want to save us, You would not show the realities which are impossible to us, and to You, our God, those are possible (Mt. 19: 26; Lk. 18: 27). You the Holy have asked us: "You will clean up yourself if you want me to come". And I have said to You the Holy: "The mud cannot clean itself". And You the Holy have told us again: "He who want to be found worthy of gifts, let him see My traces in all things". But how will be able him who is blind from birth, to see (Jn. 9: 1), if his eyes are not open? The blind searches for a guide in order to find his unimportance ministration. Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, was sitting beside the road, asking for mercy, and when he heard that the light of the righteousness was passing on that road, he shouted out, saying: "Son of David, have mercy on me". And when Your kindness had mercy on him and called him and asked him: "What do you want me to do to you?", he said: "Master, to see", and Your kindness immediately said: "See". And he saw Your traces and he followed You (Mk. 10: 46, 52; Lk. 18: 35-43).

And I want to shout out. But I am rebuked by that one who always wants to darken the eyes of the ones who see. If Your kindness deigns to call me and to tell me: "What do you want Me to do to you?" I will shout out like that one did: "Lord, my eyes to be opened".

But even the lepper, if he had been able to clean up himself, he wouldn't have shouted out: "Lord, if You want, you can clean me up" (Mt. 8: 2), but he would have cleaned up himself. So, I am shouting out like he did. Give me too this holy answer: "I will, be clean" and the leprosy will leave me. And being cleaned and by seeing, I will see your traces[126], so that I will be able to step on Your traces. For Youa re the path of the strayed ones".

But I prayer you too, Father: Yes, Father, pray to our Master Christ, for my eyes to be opened, for you are my guide

[126] One won't be able to walk on the Lord's traces if he doesn't see Him. He who doesn't know that himself is totally sunk in his passions which tie him to the material things, he won't be able to ascend to a superior life-plan. To see that superior life-plan the man doesn't reach by himself. But the man must ask God for the power of seeing it, for God is the light-Source, the sight-Giver, by itself His showing. So, if one doesn't ask God for this sight, he will show that he doesn't actually want to see that superior life-plan, namely that he doesn't actually want to part with the darkened plan which he is on.

taking me to Master Jesus. For His is the glory together with the Father and with the Holy Ghost, forever. Amen.

Answer sent back by Barsanuphius (V. 152) "Now is the well-received time" (2 Cor. 6: 2) for understanding the word of the Gospel: "Not the healthy ones need the doctor, but the ill ones" (Lk. 5: 31). But when the ill one comes to see the doctor, he must guard the things ordered him by the doctor, according to him who said: "He who comes close to God he must believe that God is and that God rewards them who are searching for Him" (Hebr. 11: 6). This is for faithful is Him Who said: "I will give them hundredfold in this age and in the future age eternal life" (Mk. 10: 30). Therefore, they who come closer to our great Doctor are enlightened by Him and He heals them of all their souly illnesses. Let's therefore not bragging ourselves by saying that we are believers. This is because, if we brag that we are believers, we will be judges as hypocrites and unbelievers. Out of the external things it is shown the unshown faith which dwells into the hidden realities of the heart. If we believe in our Savior Christ Who says: "Be it to you according to your faith" (Mt. 9: 29), He will say to our soul that live within our body: "Dare, daughter, your faith has saved you" (Mt. 9: 22).

So, our faith doesn't consist of uttering it and of heralding it with our mouth, but it consists of the consummate faith shown after healing[127].

If, therefore, you have believed and you have been healed, you will walk and you won't stumble. Have you been healed, you won't limp. Show that the leak of your blood has stopped. And if you have reached, man to these things, you will have come closer to that state when you will hear our Savior saying to the fully cleaned and beautified soul: "You are wholly beautiful my near one and there is no stain in you" (Son of Song 4: 7), and when you hear the Apostle Who says: "Not having any wrinkle, neither anything like that"[128] (Eph. 5: 27).

So, the door has been opened to us and the it has been laid in front of us the path leading to life, but in the same time we find out that "through many troubles we must enter the

[127] All of us are weak and ill regarding out faith, and we can, at most, affirm our faith by word. Only him who has ben healed of his illness, without material means, only him shows that he has believed strongly.

[128] The soul in Greek is of feminine gender (ψυχη). That's why it is called as "daughter" or "beautiful you are".

Kingdom of Heavens" (Acts 14: 22). Let's therefore persevere in the toil of our deeds. This is because verily "the present sufferings aren't worthy of the glory that will be unveiled to us" (Rom. 8: 18); and "God isn't unjust so that to forget" (Hebr. 6: 10) such toils, if we keep our obedience to the end. This is for he says: "He who has endures to the very end, he will be saved" (Mt. 10: 22), into Christ Jesus. Amen.

60. (V. 153) Question to the same Great Oldman, in form of a prayer, about the defiled thoughts and about resurrection:

You Who are my life and my resurrection (Jn. 11: 29), You examine us for we are Your creature, and You clean us up, Fou Holy, of the legion of the evil, for You have had mercy on us and yore You cast out the legion of devils when they asked to enter the pigs (Mk. 5: 9-12). Have the devils entered the speechless pigs or they have entered me the speaking one? This is because I have received them and I have thrown myself form height into the sea[129]*. And the waves carry me without being I conscious about that. But now somebody pushed me from within me I to wake the helmsman up, so that him to stretch me his hands and to pull me out from deep, as He did to Peter, and Him to tell me: "Why have you doubt yourself, you of little faith?" (Mk. 4: 38; Mt. 14: 31). And for you have let us know through the answers of Your servant Barsanuphius, that you will place us in a sole tomb, will we also resurrect together? This is because I fear Him Who said: "There will be two in a field; one will be take and one will be left. Two will be at the mill; one will be taken and one will be felt" (Mt. 24: 40-41).*

So, because since the creation of the world the people have been sleeping and the bodies of the saints and of the sinner are often buries together, will they also resurrect together? When your chosen angels will come to resurrect the righteous, will there be resurrected all the people, or only the chosen people? That's why, by fearing, I am asking you through Your servant that, as he has shown us that we will sleep together in the same tomb, so You to show us we You will resurrect us together as well. And I

[129] It is noticeable the existential exegesis of the Scripture, applied to the own person. Everything said in the Scripture has value at any time. This exegesis is characteristic to all Fathers. The people are always the same in their ultimate depths and God always talks to them.

pray my Father Barsanuphius that, after both of us have taken crops to harvest (Jn. 4: 35), and I am sick and unable to reap, him to strive, as one who has power to bring to You, Master, for me too, the sheaf of the righteousness. This is for we can see at the ancient Fathers such a parable, because three went out to reap but one got weak as I am and he turned back to his monastic cell, but the other wto manly gathered the harvest. And when the finished the harvesting, they turned back to their places and they forced the ill one to take his payment as well: "What payment, for I haven't toiled? Only you have been toiling". And in their strife with him, so that him to take the payment, the Fathers gave him the honor to be him the first to be paid[130]. And that judgment was reckoned as blessed. So, You Master Christ God, strengthen my ask, for Your isa the glory forever. Amen.

Answer: (V. 154) A master among people choses some faithful administrators, and he give them the keys and the goods and the things of his house. And it depends of the faithful administrator how to sleep, hos to feed himself, hos to be honored by master, and whom to make friend with: with the drunkards or with them who live decorously. And the first one will meet his rebuking, while the second one will meet his happiness.

Likewise, our God has chosen his administrators from among the faithful people. God has given them His keys to lock up or to open, namely the self-mastery (the freedom). They are believers for all of them have been baptized as Christians. And they are good administrators when managing well the thing entrusted to them, namely the goods received by them at their Baptism, for their salvation. But if somebody deviated from this path, his part will be with the drunkards who are drinking the wine of the lawlessness. One like this is a speaking pig and you know what will happen to him when the Master comes (Mt. 24: 44-51). And if he manages well the things entrusted to him, everybody knows the happiness he will be given from the

[130] If they reckoned themselves as deserving primacy, they wouldn't have humbleness. The humbleness always give primacy to another. The best one reckons another as better than him. By that, the humble one maintains his primacy. This is for the other won't accept, at his turn, to receive the primacy. So, the humble gains his neighbor to even more humbleness. This is another paradox beneficial to both of them. And in this positive human delicacy one can feel the closeness of God. The humble one has thinned himself and he has become as a spiderweb, so that he allows to be see God through him.

Master. This is for he says: "All over the place their voice has been heard, and to the edges of the world their words" (Ps. 18: 4[131]).

Regarding the resurrection, other is the present age when are together the wheat and the tares (Mt. 3: 12, 13, 30). But when the resurrection comes, the evangelical word teaches us that the people wake up mixed. This is for he says: "And He will separate them one from others, as the shepherds separates the sheep from the goats" (Mt. 25: 32).

And regarding the two women and the two men He told us those things about the end of the world, and about faith and faithlessness. Regarding the harvesting done by those brothers, the good is done by two[132]. He who got ill had the will to work, but his illness impeded him. But they reckoned that the Lord strengthened them by the prayers of their brother who got ill, and both of them were helped by the grace of the Holy Ghost. So, as our Lord told to Apostles: "do not rejoice for the devils obey you, but rejoice for your names have been written in heavens" (Lk. 10: 20). Therefore, us too, let's not ask if all of us will resurrect, but let's ask if we will hear" Come, you the blessed ones of My Father, and inherit the Kingdom prepared for you siren the foundation of the world" (Mt. 25: 34), and we will be together with Jesus into the Father, as He told us (Jn. 14: 20). Him to be the glory forever. Amen.

61. (V. 155) The question of the same brother towards the same Great Oldman:

Lord Jesus Christ, the Doctor of our wounded souls, we bring You prayers out of Your holy words. Please receive them through Your servant. This is for You the Holy said Yourself: "Do not need the doctor they who are healthy, but they who are ill" (Lk. 5: 31). About this Your servant Paul said too: "He who is lame let him not limp but rather to heal himself" (Hebr. 12: 13). You have said, you the holy one, in one of your answers: "If you

[131] In KJB we have" Ps. 19: 4: "Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."; in ROB we have: Ps. 18: 4: "All over the world went their heralding, and to the edges of the world their words." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[132] There is no good done alone or in isolation. The good id a product of the communion, or it consists of searching for and in achieving the communion. This is for nobody to brag himself egotistically. Actually, the very our existence comes from others, it comes to us and it is upheld by all people and by the entire cosmos, and the cosmos comes and it is upheld by God.

are healthy, why do you limp? The healthy one doesn't limp but walks straight". But I, because I am lame and wounded, I am shouting out for you to take care of me too, as on him who descended towards Jericho and fell among thieves (Lk. 10: 3034). This is for me too I have felt among the same thieves and I have been wounded, so that I beg you bandage my wounds too and take me on your donkey, namely on the good faith, and take me to your guesthouse, so that I will be cared there where are cared all of them who suffer.

Master, that woman that suffered of a blood spill came behind you and touched Your vestments. And I take the healing on each day out of Your holy limbs, namely out of Your body and blood, and out of the water coming out of Your side. But my passion still oozes puss. This is for you have said, You the Holy, that him who comes to see the doctor and who wants to be healed, let him do the things ordered him by the doctor, so please send me, Master, if You wish, cauterizations, cataplasms, but please stop my blood spill, namely my unclean thought. And, for You have said, Lord, that the door has been opened but the god stalk from all quarters and they do not let me come closer to the door, the Good Master of the house, by seeing from far the poor coming nearer, but the poor if impeded by dogs, the Masters sends the doorkeeper to chase away the dogs and thus the poor to be able to draw nearer and to receive the mercy of Master's kindness.

Father, what does it mean what you have written me that him who has live a week of years he will see things unseen since the foundation of the world? And what should we do, for we are younger? How could we be saved? Pray the Lord for Him to show us which are those holy mountains where He told us to run so that us to be saved (Mt. 24: 16). Are those spiritual or unsee mountains? We too want to know this, so that when the hour will come, us to run there are to be saved. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Forever. Amen.

The answer of Barsanuphius: (V. 156) Brother, let's think at what we are saying and we will see that out of our word we will have our reproaching. This is because, he who comes to the doctor, if he doesn't set himself in order according to the doctor's command, he won't be delivered from his illness. And because you are saying that one must accept other medicines and means of healing as well, I wonder about our, my beloved

one, for you do now know the all-knower wisdom of our Doctor Who has cut off any motif of the man who searched for an exoneration. This is for, by combining His medical books, to every man who wants to look in those books and to be saved, He showed that they are defenseless. This is for the women always sing: "I am a worm, and not a man, and the despised part of the people" (Ps. 21: 6[133]), what should the man do? This is not said because of despising the women. Let that not be! For we haven't received the command to do that. But because the women have made on themselves, since the beginning, the causes of the falling.

But God hasn't removed them form the godlike teaching[134].

So, if we like this medicine, why do we reject it? Even though, by being deceived, we say that we do not reject this medicine, but we use it, we still say that formally: and not with our deed. And this is the truth. This is because, if we examine our inward man, we will truly find out that we do not suffer any reprimand, any rebuking, any defamation, any despising, and any reproach.

And out of the thought that you have had today, and which you have been tempted with on some other occasions too, you could have known the answer – though you have said that you didn't know that I did the things you know in order to test your love. This is for I have found, as still inhabiting you, the former man. Still, I reckon that your love benefited a lot out of these.

Our Lord is consummate and He wants all of us to be His and consummate. This is for he says: "Be consummate as your Father in heavens is" (Mt. 5: 48).

So, he who suffers these burnings with the hot iron, he will be saved. This is for, he who has in his nostril own stench, he will no longer feel another smell, even if he sits upon dead

[133] In KJB we have: Ps. 22: 6: "But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people."; in ROB we have: "And I am a worm and not a man, the rebuking of the people and the defamation of the people." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[134] The women admit, by these words, their humbleness. How much more the man should admit their humbleness too, because they do more evil deeds? But the men do not do that. This is show further on. Let them too to accept the defamations. Let them to tell to themselves: "I am a worm and not a man".

bodied[135]. And he who has been robbed by thieves, he won't have anything to give to others. Take heed, my beloved one, that all of us who are mastered by laziness, we cannot be totally worriless, neither can we truly recon what we really are: dust and ashes. And we have been growing old while nourishing our vain-glory. This is because, reckoning that our work is pleasant to God, or that sitting within our monastic cell teaches everyone, and that we have been delivered from judging and from being judged, it is the greatest vain-glory and nothing else[136].

Therefore, if the Great and Heavenly Doctor has given us the medicines and the cataplasms, where will the cause of our perdition come from, if not out of the weakness of our will[137]? In the first place, He has given us the humbleness that banishes away from within us the whole our pride and "the whole uprising that rises against the knowledge of the glory of His Son" (2 Cor. 10: 5); then He has given us the obedience that quenches the fiery arrows of the enemy" (Eph. 6: 16); then He has given us the cutting off of our will towards our neighbor[138]; and this give birth to lack-of-disturbance within our heart, and to the ever-brighter all-joyful showing of His face and of the mastery of His looking[139]. And as the biggest cataplasm that ties

[135] The not from the Greek text: "This was said by Saint Syncletica, namely he who feels his own sins we will no longer feel the sins belonging to others.

[136] They who lazily sit in their monastic cells, without repenting, without praying, they are submitted to the temptation of reckoning themselves as doing a great thing by that, so that they will be filled up with vain-glory. They reckon that they will no longer be judged for anything due to the fact that, by sitting in their monastic cell they do not know what others do, and therefore they have escaped the danger of judging others.

[137] Wanting that what God wants too, it doesn't mean having a weak will, but, on the opposite, having a weak will means wanting that what our enemy wants, who tempts us to commit evil deeds. By receiving the temptation, we renounce to the effort of our will, and we choose the easy path of doing what our enemy likes. Such a man no longer has a strong will, despite the fact that he is said as having a strong will by existing the obedience to God.

[138] The strength of the will is shown, in the same time, in the "cutting off of our will towards our neighbor, of course not for fulfilling his caprices and his urges to evil, but in order not to dominate him, but to help him, by renouncing to our will to do what we like, so that to do what is beneficial to our neighbor. The hardest thins is that of being master upon your own will.

[139] When you have cut off your will, you r will gain the lack-of-disturbance, for you will no longer want anything for yourself. You cut your will off in the benefit of your neighbor, obeying God. This makes you transparent the presence of the joyful face of God. You will see God every time your cut off your own will, everything that you have surpassed yourself by doing that. You will see God's look, in the same time shiny and loving, you will see His look as mastering upon you through love. When you feel that you no longer exist by your own will,

up all the limbs and "it heals all illness and helplessness" (Mt. 4: 23), he has given us the love that is like His love. This is for He made Himself our example, according to the saying: "Making Himself obedient all the way to death" (Phil. 2: 8). And by putting His soul for us, He taught us, saying: "Love on one another, as I love you" (Jn. 13: 34), and: "Into this all the people will know that you are My disciples, when you will have love among you" (Jn. 13: 35).

So, if you want not to limp, take the staff of the cross and hold it with your hands and so you will die and you will never limp again. This is for the dead never limps[140]. And if you have this staff, you will no longer need a doorman. By this staff you banish away not only the dogs, but even the chief of the wild beasts, that lion that roars (1 Pt. 5: 8). That's why Jacob said too: "with my staff I crossed the river" (Gen. 32: 10); and again: "He bowed down on the top of his staff" (Gen. 47: 31). And Moses did signs with his staff (Exod. 4: 17). And he who is nailed on the staff, he will doubtlessly be delivered from the flowing moisture. This is for him who dies, he will die to the sin[141]. And what will we hope for after these, if not for the resurrection on the third day? This is for it suffices to the crucified one to be resurrected together with Christ.

And by what I said about the weeks, I showed that there will be diverse troubles and changes. And by the mountains which you have asked about, let's understand the Holy Mary, the Birth-Give of God, and the saints from later who will live during those times, by doubtlessly bearing the seal of the Son[142]. This is for God saves many for His Son[143]. Him be the glory, forever. Amen.

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when you feel that you exist through God, you will feel yourself as assured within Him. All these virtues are modes of the communion.

[140] The cross is the staff which the man leans on in his righteous spiritual walking. That's why, someone grabbing this staff with his hands means allowing himself to be nailed, to be crucified, and so to become unseparated from the cross. This makes the man strong in his righteous walking, and it makes the man dead to the evil things of the egotism. By both these ministrations, the cross banishes ways the spiritual dogs. BY that, the cross keeps also the place of the doorman at the door of our being. With these thoughts, we place on the outside side of our being the sign of the cross, so that we lock ourselves to the temptations.

[141] Actually, he who dies, he will die to his egotism. But he dies for God, and not because of disgust he felt for his life, namely he dies by sacrificing himself as a man unseparated from God, in order him to life in God and in his fellow humans, as sons of God.

[142] The seal of the Son is the cross, for the cross has been imprinted within their being, by crucifying the former man of the sin, who was separated from God, and by imprinting withing

62. (V. 157) The question of the same brother addressed to the same Great Oldman: Unseparated Trinity do not separate Yourself from us! "Out of the mouth of the children and of those who suckle You have prepared praise to Yourself (Ps. 8: 2[144]).

Father, you are a true and good disciple of the true Doctor. You have given us medicines and means for our healing. And the first means of burning pricked through my heart and I cannot endure the pains. This is for you have written to us, us to sing: "I am a worm not a man" (Ps. 21: 7[145]). I will truly sing and I will worship and extoll God forever. But do I dare to say that I am worm and not man? This is because I am munched away by the worm of the corruption. I wonder, is this too the meaning of the incorruptible worm? Is this the worm that has come for me in order to get me rid of the corruption's worm that corrupted the mankind? This is because by being this worm corruptible and by corrupting everything which it enters, it penetrated the wounds and it caused rottenness and stench, and has come the incorruptible worm which they said about: "I am worm and not man". And as the corruptible worm was entering the wounds, likewise the incorruptible worm enters "in the deepest parts of the earth" (Eph. 4: 9) and therefore, as you said, it has broken all the uncleanness of the old worm. And thus, by cleaning up everybody, He elevated them but He has remained incorruptible. This is that worm that cleaned Job up of the old worm, telling him: "Get up and girdle your waist like a man" (Job 38: 3 and 40: 2). This worm also pulled the dragon with the fishing rod (Job 40: 19020), hanging the dragon on the cross. This this worm all the

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them the quality as sons of the Father, who no longer live but for fulfilling His will and for loving Him as His godlike Son loves Him, and together with His Son.

[143] He who runs to the prayers of the Mother of the Lord, and to the prayer of the saints, as to some mountains, he actually runs to the faith into Christ. He who doesn't believe that Christ has been born out of Virgin, he won't believe that God has made Himself man. He who believed in the prayers of the saint towards Christ, he will believe in the saints' faith in Him as God Who can save us therefore.

[144] In KJB we have: Ps. 8: 2: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger."; in ROB we have: Ps. 8: 2: "Out of the mouth of the children and of those who suckle you have committed praise, because of Your enemies, so You to mute out the enemy and the avenger." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[145] *Vid supra*. (E. l. t.'s n.).

things obeyed "except Him Who submitted Him all realities", for He submitted all realities under His feet (1 Cor. 15: 27).

The corruptible worm corrupts everything, and there is nothing on earth, either wood of food, or soil, or body, which not to be consumed, except the salt and the oil. But what is the salt and the oil, except the Father Who has obeyed Him all realities[146]*, and Who also salted the creation with His mercy, and Who gave the Apostles salt too, so that they to salt up the world, by protecting the world against the stench of the idols, and the world to come to the good fragrance of the true God. Amen.*

But what does it mean the mustard gran, and why He likened the Kingdom of Heavens to it, and not to an olive tree and not to a date palm, or to other among the tall trees, but to one that is so small (Mt. 13: 31)? This was because the mustard is the sourest and it stings our hearts. Yes, Father, pray the Lord for Him to show us the mystery of this worm and of the mustard grain, in order us too to extoll the Father and the Son together with the Holy Ghost, forever. Amen.

Father, you reminded me about your old letters, which I haven't forgotten either, but I remember the things done to me by the enemy. This is because the enemy got furious when seeing the fruit that was brought forth in that place. But your patience and God's love for people didn't aloe enemy's evil will to be fulfilled. But we have been, until now, extolling God. And for you have told us that you repent after doing inappropriate things, I am telling you: only if I was able to repent too, so that I wouldn't remain totally unrepented.

And because him who has fallen among thieves he has been robbed and no longer has what to give to others, I beg you, as a hungry that I am, you to throw me the crumbles remaining to you, so that I too to receive my food as a dog sitting under your table, out of the things you have. And because you also said that

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[146] One of the ideas present in these rows it is that the evil lives by corrupting the existing things. The evil doesn't have an existence by itself. "For neither the nothing ever existed, not the question could have been… But behold, the inexistence has its existence out of Is, because it can water itself", says poet Lidia Stăniloae in the volume *The Place where You wait* (in the poetry entitled *Munchausen*). The second idea: the salt and the oil are reckoned as symbols of the heavenly Father Who, as origin of existence cannot be evil or corrupt, and who, through His Son made man, He is preserving, forever, the creation as well. One could say that the Father is the salt that liberates all things from corruption, and into the Holy Ghost there is the oil giving fluidness or youth to everybody's non-aged life.

the pride has grown old within me, and the impulse of laughing at others, please pray for me so that that to leave me.

Answer of Barsanuphius: (V. 158) David said, yore: "My wounds got stinky and have rotten because of my insanity" (Ps. 37: 5[147]). Therefore, the insanity is the source of all evils. This is because my insanity gave birth to my disobedience, and the disobedience gave birth to wound. And, consequently, to the wound, the same insanity gave birth to indifference, and the indifference caused the rottenness and the stench. And the wicked body has been filled with worms and has rotten. And because of being rotten it has been thrown into the sea and it has become food to the big fish. And the body has been dwelling into the entrails of the big fish until the heavenly worm has come and nailed the fish rod, and he has descended within the entrails of the big fish and he has got out, through the fish's mouth, the food swallowed by the fish, together with the fish's entrails. And by taking the body he has anointed the body with oil, he has soaked the body into water, and he has backed the body in fire. For he says: "He will baptize you into the Holy Ghost and into fire" (Mt. 3: 11). And then he has nourished the body with bread, and he gladdened the body with wine, he has sprinkled salt on the body, and he has escaped the body from corruptness. In addition to that, he soaked the body with mustard, so that he has removed all the rottenness. Then he has withered the nostrils of the dragon in order the dragon no longer be able to smell, and he made the dragon's eyes fogy in order the dragon no longer be able to see the consummation of His humbleness.

So, by knowing all these things, let's not overlook His urge, so that not to be accomplished with us to the word: "if the salt gets broken what it will be salted with?" (Mt. 5: 13).

And what is the absence of these ones except that what was said: "The insane one said within his heart: there is no God" (Ps. 13: 1[148]). If you haven't forgotten anything form the

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[147] In KJB we have: Ps. 38: 5: "My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness."; in ROB we have: Ps. 37: 5: "My wound has become stinky and the have rotten, form the face of my insanity." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[148] In KJB we have: Ps. 38: 5: "THE fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good."; in ROB we have: Ps. 13: 1: "The insane one said within his heart: "There is no God!". The people have become corrupt and they have become ugly in their occupations. There is no one who does kindness,

old things and if you know the last things, you will listen to Him who sys: "He who know the will of his master but he doesn't fulfill it, he will deviate much" (Lk. 12: 47). Therefore, if by knowing those we tell them, but in the same time we overlook them, that "woe to you" - uttered against them who commit sins knowingly - it won't be far from us. But if we reckon ourselves as dust and ashes, as Abraham and Job did (Gen. 18: 27; Job 42: 6), we won't ever be robbed, but we will forever have what to give to others: not gold or silver, but humbleness and patience and love towards God[149, 150]. Him it is due the glory forever. Amen.

63. (V. 159) The same brother, by feeding himself on a little bread, he again asked the Great Oldman about the diet.

Answer: Brother, rejoice into the Lord. Pray God to give me consummate patience. Because I start a thing but I do not bring git to an end, and I immediately wobble in my work. I want to lay down a beginning and to reach an end. This is for I am hearing the Apostle who says about beginning and about end: "He Who starts withing us all the good thing He will bring that thing to an end until the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1: 6).

But even if I, the needy, I do nothing pleasant to God, at your request I am giving you my opinion as to a brother: take, if you can, four little breads[151] a week, and on Sundays, because of the helplessness of the body, take a soup, or some boiled

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there is no one." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[149] It is mentioned the foundation of the monastery where they were both of them, which the enemy didn't do it, but the enemy wanted to destroy it, because of seeing the fruit of the true life growing within that monastery.

[150] When you reckon yourself as nothing, you are more than him who has no conscience. This is because that one by being nothing, he doesn't even have at least the conscience of being nothing. He is a nothing in an increased degree. Having the conscience that you are nothing it means having a conscience. Sand through this conscience you not only know your nothing, but you will also know the greatness of God. And in a way, the man, through his conscience, he participated more to Him Who the man is from. This is for the man knows about the greatness of his Creator. The man can give forever, through his humbleness, something to others too.

[151] In the Greek text: λαιτιγα, which is explain in a note as: πίττα (pitta).

vegetables. I reckon that is good you to take those. And whether I speak stupidly, I don't know. Forgive me, brother, for I should have asked you to guide me, but my pride hasn't left me yet, and the pride is the root of all evils. Pray brother for us to cross over the stretch of the road from ahead of us. Because it is full of swirls and of dangers, and I stupidly laugh at it and I remain careless. But I do not cut off my hope. For I have the Master merciful and loving. Give me your hand, with love, and pull me towards Him, in order Him to save me because I am miserable. Him it is due the glory forever.

64. (V. 160) The same brother, by not keeping the diet recommended him by the Oldman, he asked the Oldman the same thing for the second time. And the Oldman answered him like this:

Brother, obeying I your love, I am giving you an advice. You find my word powerless. And this is not because of you, but it is because of me. And this is because my words are fruitless. My words do not have power because are not from deeds accomplished with sweat. But he who asks and doesn't obey, he angers God, because after the question there will come also the envy of the enemies. We still do not know even up to these days the craftsmanships of the devils. This is said, ceaselessly, by the Apostle, saying: "We do not know his thoughts" (2 Cor. 2: 11). Dare, my brother, for if I didn't reckon you of the same soul with me, I wouldn't answer you. This is because, as I said before, I am not worthy of something like that. But for God attached me to your love, I am saying you again, stupidly: use four little breads a week, and on Sunday take a soup or some boiled vegetables. But do not reckon in your heart that I have given you a command. For this isn't a command, but it is the opinion of a brother of yours. The stadium has been opened; let's run in order to take the crown (1 Cor. 9: 24). This is because we are humans submitted to corruption and lasting shortly on earth. Let's run in order us to find the mercy on that fearful and scary hour, into Christ Jesus our Lord Whom it is due the glory forever. Amen.

65. (V. 161) The answer of the same great Oldman towards the same brother about the meaning of the answer sent by the Oldman.

Brother, what can I tell you about that, because I haven't really done anything? So, you say that I have been doing and that I am doing; I do not remember anything, except, that I have been always upsetting God because of my deeds. That's why I do not expect anything for my deeds, but I hope that God will save me for His love for people. This is for He dies in order to save the sinners (1 Tim. 1: 15). I therefore trust His name, until Himself will come to me and ask me: "What do you want Me to do to you?", in order I to answer together with the blind man: "To see, my Lord" (Mt. 10: 46-52). This is because, if I had deeds, by fearing the condemnation of the Pharisee (Lk. 18: 10-14), I wouldn't dare to say it. That's why I am telling you, brother, that the whole my life and the whole my hope hangs on Him, and I pray day and night I to be cleaned of my shown and of my hidden passions. So, what could I tell you about deeds, when I hear that "any mouth will be shut" (Rom. 3: 19), and that: "him who praises himself, let him praise himself into the Lord" (1 Cor. 1: 31)? But blessed is him who has been cleaned up of his anger and of his other passions and who kept all the commandments and he still says: "Unworthy servant I am" (Lk. 17: 10). This is because, if we do a good deed but we lose it because of our pride, what will we benefit of it, because we build and tear down on each day? But he who despises that glory and that dishonor, that one can be saved into Christ Jesus our Lord. Him to be the glory. Amen.

Surrender yourself to the Lord and assertively live a life in quietude, praying for me, for I am unworthy and humble.

66. (V. 162) The question of the same brother towards the same Oldman: Brother, pray for me, for I am getting tired. Before taking advice from you, anything that I was reckoning that it was good, I was doing that according to my opinion, and without getting tired. But ever since you have been giving me advices, I am getting so tired that I am getting ill. I wrote you before, about these things, but you reckoned me as haughty and you have sent me a word about Pharisee. But I didn't write you, Father, because I was bragging, but because I was in need. I beg you,

Father, you to pray the Lord so that Him to unveil me what is it with me?

The answer of the same great Oldman: Brother, the Holy Scripture says: "Do all things with advice and without advice" (Prov. 24: 72). When you were working without advice, and according to your will, you tell me that you were not getting tired with your mind. But there is nobody needing no advice, except only God Who has made the wisdom (Prov. 3: 22). But when you searched, according to the will of God, you to cut off your will and to achieve the humbleness, by taking as adviser your smaller brother, you infuriated the demon that hates the good and who is always full of envy towards all people. Can you see the devil's cunningness? I didn't appoint you anything from me, but you asked me and I advised you like a brother. And you heard my advice, but you disregarded it and you accomplished more than I told you. And I told you about the things of the Pharisee, for the Pharisee said what he said by bragging himself. And you asked for an assurance based on your deeds, and that is nothing else but a sign of pride. Take heed and look carefully at how, when you lay down a beginning, the demon immediately brings you a motif for you to leave that beginning. And you lay down again another beginning, but you will leave that beginning too, by not reminding that "he who endures to the end, he will be saved" (Mt. 10: 22) and that "He Who starts within you all the good thing, That One will bring it to an end until the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (Phil. 1: 6)[152]. If you are pleased to do it according to your will, as you have been doing it until now, I won't be upset, because I don't want to be somebody's Abba or teacher. This is for I have as reproach the

[152] Here the patience has a meaning of perseverance into the good thing that you have started in repentance, in fasting, in prayer, in taking care of somebody. Him wo has not perseverance, he won't fulfill anything and he won't accomplish on himself. On the contrary, he will produce within himself a disorder. And such a man won't be able to stand next to God, or such am man won't be able to feel God, for God is the spring of the steadfast order and He is the Subject of the consummate Self-control. Being such, God is present with His help there where this road of the accomplishments takes place, accomplishments growing up one out of another; and there where this road is not traveled, God is not present there, but there is present the ghost of the disorder that tears all things apart, and he makes the man not to fulfill on himself and in all things there to be spread the chaos, and this is because the devil cannot lead the created world to anything, nor the created world can reach anywhere by itself, once the created world exists by the will of God, so that the devil attempts to at least bring the world to disorder, by which it cannot fulfill anything really.

words of the Apostle who says: "You who teach another, why don't you teach yourself?" (Rom. 2: 21).

Brother, it depends on them who work for their salvation "to thin up their soul as a spider net" (Ps. 38: 15[153]). Therefore, we need much patience until entering, through many troubles, the Kingdom of God, into Christ Jesus our lord. Amen. Forgive me, brother, and pray for me.

67. (V. 163) The question of the same brother towards the same Great Oldman: You who searched to the strayed sheep (Mt. 18: 12) of Jesus, you teach us too how must we search for the Shepherd. Father, I want to ask you about a word: It was written: "Search for the Lord and strengthen yourself. Always look at His face" (Ps. 104: 4[154]). But how could the sinner man always to look at the Lord? Teach us too, through Him Whom you have been wised up by, for Us too to always look at the face of the Lord. For Him it is due the glory forever. Amen.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother Euthimios, I always pray myself to your love, toil together with me in my prayer towards the loving-of-people God. You love asked me to write to you how we must search for the Shepherd. Since the first day and until today I have been praying God for your ask, and God tells me: "Clean your heart of the thoughts of the former man and I will fulfill your asks[155]. This is for My gifts take place within the clean ones, and My gifts are bestowed to them, and as long as your heart is moved by anger and by the remembrance of the evil and by the passions resembling to the former man, the wisdom won't come within your heart. If you desire my gifts, you will remove from within you the vessels of

[153] In KJB we have: Ps. 39: 11: "When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity. Selah"; in ROB we have" Ps. 38: "And You have thinned up his soul as a spider web; but vainly get troubled any earthling." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[154] In KJB we have" Ps. 105: 4: "Seek the Lord, and his strength: seek his face evermore."; in ROB we have: Ps. 104: 4: "Search for the Lord and strengthen yourself; look at His face, always." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[155] One can feel Christ after removing from the own heart the disturbance, the narrowing of the worries, and the egotistic passions. In such a state, one can feel the broadness of the generosity, the calm of the sovereign self-control of the supreme and all-loving Subject Who gives peace to the man as well.

the foreign one[156] and My gifts will come to you by themselves. Haven't you ever heard the word: "One cannot serve to masters" (Mt. 6: 24)? If one serves Me, he won't serve the devil. If one serves the devil, he won't serve Me. If one wants to be worthy of with My gifts, let him take heed at My traces. This is for, as an innocent Lamb, I have received all the sufferings, while not opposing in anything[157]. I have told you too, you to have the innocence of the pigeon (Mt. 10: 16) and instead of that you have the savageness of the passions. You see that I am not saying: "Walk in the light of your fire" (Isa. 50: 11)[158].

By hearing these things, I am in grief and in moans, until His kindness will have mercy on me too, so that he will deliver me from the awful passions of the former man, in order I to step on the traces of the new man and to receive everything coming upon me with much patience. This is for you know what the patience works. The Apostle reminded about that too (Rom. 15: 4). Pray for me, my brother, so that to be bestowed to me too I to correct myself. This is because I am mindless, but I love them who teach me and who rebuke me, for I know that their teaching will be towards my soul's salvation. Pray for me also for I to escape from falling off what it is right, because of the troubles I have from all things. And especially forgive me for I am always throwing you into tiredness. This is for that will bring you much reward into Christ Jesus our Lord Whom it is due the glory forever. Amen.

68. (V. 164) The question of the same brother towards the same Great Oldman: Father, my tiredness which I told you about, you have taken them upon yourself. This thing is done by the wiseman not only for sharing the burden with somebody who is

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[156] Those are the narrow, agitated, and dirty vessels of the passionate senses, in which cannot be contained the broadness of the sovereign generosity and peace of God.

[157] The unselfish limitlessness, the generous and self-mastering broadness of God has taken in the embodied Son of God, the form of enduring the sufferings to death. Far from avoiding to suffer for us and far from being contrary to that, the dispassion of God is its premise, its foundation. This thing should be deepened by the newer Occidental theology, which reckon that we must leave the idea of the dispassionate God and to replace it for the idea of a God Who is capable of suffering.

[158] They who are passionate light up a fire among themselves too, a fire of the evilness, of the enmity. They will eternally be burnt in that fire, and they will suffer the torment caused them by that fire. There where isn't the calm of the self-control, there won't be felt the presence of the All-Mastering God Who reconciles all things with His love.

close to them, but also for many, and for the benefit of our souls. And even more than that, as a true parent, you urge us to ask you about the way of our life. Therefore, I beg you, once the Lord has sent you to me as a shore and as a place of escaping, have mercy and prey the Master for Him to have mercy on me and to show me a little light, for I often fall because of my nescience; and you teach me as you taught me for the first time, how must I repent myself. And after that, please show me the path so that I will know how to walk on it.

Answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, I am talking to you as to my own soul. This is for the Lord tied my soul together with your soul, by telling me: "Do not part with him". That's why it hasn't been me teaching you, but you have been the one teaching me. This is because I fear him who said: "You who teach another, why don't you teach yourself?" (Rom. 2: 21). But because you are telling me that, despite being said that "It is enough a sign to the wiseman" (Prov. 9: 9), "just because of that it is not enough to me"[159], but you wish to hear it more limpidly, I am going to answer you. Although, I know that if a mindless man mistakes in his words, he will be forgiven by anybody. This is because he is mindless and he is excused. But is a wiseman is wrong, he won't be forgiven. This is because the wiseman is wise and he mistakes knowingly. So, if one of the brothers from outside[160] are wrong in what they say, he will be forgiven for he is like everybody. But if we are wrong, while we are reckoned by people as withdrawn and living in quietude and kind, what forgiveness could we have? So, if you have to know openly the thing which you are asking me about, I will tell you: Sit inside as one who is dead to the world. This is because, when you go to meet somebody out of love and joyfully, but you turn back angrily and dominated by the memory of the evil and you defame another and not yourself and you do not say: "I'm worthless" but you respect yourself, and when an occasion occurs you say: "Tell them that I said that and they will obey you with pleasure", what do you thing that you are, by saying that they will receive your word with pleasure? Do you reckon yourself alike Prophet Elijah? So, you must defame yourself and

[159] "Because I am not wise".
[160] From outside the monastery.

all the things happened to you in this case. You must know that nothing happens to you without the will of God, either restring, or giving of thanks, either trouble towards patience. Take heed at the written word: "You must bear even him who slap you on your cheek" and so on (2 Cor. 11: 20). How far are we from God! If you want to find out the way, it is this: You will reckon him who hits you as one who caresses you. And you will reckon him who dishonors you, as one who glorified you; and you will reckon him who troubles you, as one who rests you. And if because of your forgetfulness, or if willingly, some people do not pay you the usual attention, you won't mind but you will rather say that that will have been the will of God. And when some people like those come to see you, you will receive them joyfully, by saying that being you worthless God will have had mercy on you as on Daniel who, when God visited him, Daniel was saying only this: "Gor has remembered me (Dan. 12: 37), because he reckoned on himself as worthless. Do not reckon as right to conclude your sayings with the expression: "I have said that well" or, when you have thought something, to say: "I've thought it well". Where it is the good? Why can't us see the good in not upsetting anybody either with our word, or with our deed, so that God will be together with us in all things?[161] You have fought to show your thought to your brothers and to accomplish you will, by saying: "If this won't be done today…" and you have wounded the thought of the younger ones who say: "What a big deal would be two more days? Why the old man has not patience to wait a little longer?". Tell me, it has been really done a good thing? And have you ascended to heavens[162]? You were simply stricken by the devil at it was due,

[161] This gentleness makes our being transparent to God. This gentleness vibrates by the presence of God as by a love-breeze, like the petal of a flower vibrates by a gentle breeze. But that makes also our fellow humans, for they are sensitized by our gentleness, to become transparent to God at their turn. Wherefrom this force of the gentleness come if not from God Who has the supreme quality of the existence shown in an untold noblesse? On the contrary, by affirming your own righteousness, by separating yourself from all others and by placing yourself an everybody else in the disturbance of the insensitive strife, you will have locked yourself towards God. God cannot be contained by this narrowness, neither by the opaque disturbance that is incapable of clear sight.

[162] Have you ascended to heavens by hurrying yourself up to immediately accomplish something because you wanted that to be done so? Wasn't in that a disturbance and a pride, that locked you up, and you even locked you up to yourself, and so you separated yourself from God Who is the spring of the non-narrowed ambience of understanding and of love whose subject you are called to be.

by brother. Let's now leave the dead to bury their dead ones[163]. And let's preach the Kingdom of God in to Christ Jesus our Lord Whom it is due the glory forever. Amen.

69. (V. 165) The question of the same brother towards the same Great Oldman, addressed in form of a prayer: "You who are the life of the despaired ones, please do not overlook me! Because I lay down in despair". "The showing of Your words lightens and it wises the little children" (Ps. 118: 130[164]). You told me, you the holy, that I must clean up myself and I must get out from within myself the former man. But how could the mud clean itself up? Or how can the house adorn itself, without he who has built the house up to adorn the house? Or how can the claypot, made by the potter, to burn itself, if not the potter himself will place that claypot into the oven and without the potter checking the pot whether it is good or not? Therefore, You too, You the holy, if You want to save this creature of Yours, send the godlike fire of Yours, so that the claypot made by You to receive from You the oil and not to fall apart. For Your is the glory forever. Amen.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, please do not force me to speak, for I want to embrace the quietude and the silence. Therefore, you must support your heart and persevere in steadfastness. This is because he who envied Adam since the beginning and he determined Adam to be cast of our Paradise, he envies our union into thought. But He who said: "I saw satan falling from sky as a lightning" (Lk. 10: 18), He will make satan helpless and He will break satan's snare apart. That's why you msut not allow yourself to be deceived by satan in any concern, neither you must allow yourself to be wabbled from your place. Satan deceived even Malchus. Because he is awfully infuriated against us. But when we humble ourselves, our Lord hinders satan's work. Let's therefore always defame ourselves. This is for, of this consists the victory. As about the thought to leave the monastery for the wilderness, the Fathers said that there

[163] Saint Gregory of Nyssa urged the monks not to allow themselves to be taken into mastery by vain-glory as some souly dead ones, who are buried by praises and in other praises by other dead ones (About the rule of the Christian life in: Churchly Fathers and Writers).

[164] In KJB we have: Ps. 119: 130: "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."; in ROB we have: Ps. 118: 130: "The showing of Your word enlightens and it wises up the little children."

are three precious things which if somebody guards them, he will be able to live in the mid of the people, or wherever he would be, as in wilderness: one to defame on himself, to throw his will behind, and to lay himself down under the feet of all creatures. Your love must also know that the whole devil's fight is to separate us from one another. This is for the devil sees the Scripture as truly fulfilled at us: "The brother helped by the brother, he will be like a stronghold fortifies and surrounded by walls (Prov. 18: 19). May God not give satan to fulfill his will with us, but, according to the Apostle's word: "To crash him quickly under our feet" (Rom. 16: 20). This is for I hope that both of us will be thrown in the same pit, as I said you before. And that's why God has gathered us together, in order us to benefit from one another. Even these temptations are means towards our benefit and strengthening.

Therefore, my brother, you must live in quietude, and pray for us to cross over this part of our road, so that our days won't be spent vainly. This is for the time draw closer and our enemy is furious[165]. God won't leave his toiling to be in vain. Let that not be! But as One Who "wants all the people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2: 11), He wants you to enter to consummation. But our Lord said to His apostles: "Then you say that unworthy servants you are" (Lk. 17: 20). That's why we control ourselves. And our Lord works His mercy on us for His name which we call it upon us (Jer. 14: 9). For Him it is due the glory, forever. Amen.

70. (V. 166) The devils sowing, because of his envy, in the thought of the Oldman who was calling the Oldman, a doubt concerning his answers, The Oldman knew the thought from within his heart and wrote him these:

Before all, I extoll the All-Holy and of-one-being Trinity, by saying: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, now and always and forever and ever. Amen. I haven't

[165] We must not spend our time either in sins or vainly, but in order to do good and to advance in consummation, in the closeness to God, and in communion with one another, in getting liberated from the slavery of the separator passions which have neither purpose nor horizon. One must use his time the more seriously as his time draws closer to its end, and the enemy is furious on them who he thinks they will escape from him, for they have started on the road that takes them to the harmonious and eternal living into God.

started with this doxology without a purpose, but in order I to prove to the devil who hates the good, that is the hallucinations shown by him there cannot be seen anything of such a doxology, but there is only disturbance, sadness, and fear. Let's therefore, brother, give thanks to God for the deliverance from the temptation that has come upon us as upon some mindless people. This is for God's love for people hasn't allowed us to be lost to the end. This is for always will be true the word that says: "Alive I am", says the Lord, "for I do not want the death of the sinner, but him to turn back and be alive" (Ezek. 18: 23). Therefore, let's give always thanks to Him Who has saved us and Who always saves us: Him Whom the angels thank, the Powers which are above the world, the heavenly hosts, the Cherubs and the Seraphs, ceaselessly and uninterruptedly, with high voices, by shouting out and raising their voices and saying: "Holy, Holy, Holy is Lord Sabaoth" (Isa. 6: 3). By thinking at that, let us too to give thanks Him Whom "the sky is a chair and the earth is the stool of His feet" (Isa. 66: 1), Whom all the creation serves (Judith[166] 16: 14).

Starting from this example from the Scripture, let us too to give thanks to the Father for He has saved the world and He didn't spare even His Only Begotten Son, but He has sent His Son as Savior and Deliverer of our souls. Let's give thanks to the Son Who has humbled Himself, by making Himself obedient to death on the cross (Phil. 2: 8) for us the people. Let's give thanks to the Holy Ghost of-life-Maker, Who made Peter to repent and commanded Peter to go to Cornelius (Acts 10: 19-20), and He gave Peter power to rise from dead ad in case of Tabitha (Acts 9: 40), for the He always goes ahead and crushes the enemy's snares in front of those who call Him, saying according to David's prophecy: "The snare has been broken and we have been delivered; our help in the name of God Who made the sky and the earth" (Ps. 123: 7-8[167]).

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[166] This book - together with other thirteen books – it is not given in the KJB, but it is given in ROB. It can be downloaded in English translation from www.academia.edu, bearing the title *Bible Missing Texts*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[167] In KJB we have: Ps. 124: 7-8: "Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped. // Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth."; in ROB we have: Ps. 123: 7-8: "Our soul has escaped as a bird from the snare of the hunters; the snare has been broken and we have been delivered. // Our help is in the name of the Lord Who made the sky and the earth." (E. l. t.'s n.)

Behold, therefore, that He has had mercy on us and He has healed us from such a grave illness. Let's hear Him saying: "Behold, you have been healed, from now on sin no more, lest you will suffer even worse" (Jn. 5: 14). Let's come in everything to humbleness.

This is for the humble one lays on the floor; and he who lays on the floor, where could him fall at anymore? But it is proven that him who is at height he will easily fall[168].

So, if we have turned ourselves and whether we have corrected ourselves, that is not from ourselves. "God's is the gift" (Eph. 2: 8). This is for "the Lord, he says, straightens them who have been crumbled and He wises the blind" (Ps. 145: 8[169]). And in the written word: "Who will separate us from the love of Christ?" (Rom. 8: 35), it is comprised a thought of a great consummation. But we have cut off the rope of the love, so that we are dying and we got separated from the ship of Christ.

But it will be good if I do not break the seal of Christ by speaking too much. This is for I am urged by him who says: "There where the wisemen are, you won't claim that you are wise" (Sirach[170] 7: 5). Therefore, I am stopping my word. I have written you as to a truly loved brother. If you do these things, you will reach at the path leading to the eternal life, into Christ Jesus our Lord Whom it is due the glory, the honor, and the mastery, together with the Father and with the Holy Ghost, forever. Amen.

71. (V. 167) BY receiving that answer the Oldman surrendered himself to the crying and to the tears. In order to comfort him, the Great Oldman wrote him these:

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[168] If you reckon about yourself that you are the lowest one, you could fall because of your pride anymore. If you reckon yourself as the lowest one, you will no longer like to boast yourself out of pride. You will no longer be tempted by pride and you will no longer be able to reckon somebody else as lower than you are; you will no longer want to affirm yourself. You will no longer fear that somebody's opinion will lower you, lower than you are.

[169] In KJB we have: Ps. 146: 8: "The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind: the Lord raiseth them that are bowed down: the Lord loveth the righteous:"; in ROB we have: Ps. 145: 8: "The Lord straightens the hunched over, the Lord wises the blind, the Lord loves the righteous;" (E. l. t.'s n.)

[170] This book - together with other thirteen books – it is not given in the KJB, but it is given in ROB. It can be downloaded in English translation from www.academia.edu, bearing the title *Bible Missing Texts*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

Brother, let's throw behind ourselves all the past things, according to the Apostle's word, who says: "The old things have passes, behold, all the things have been renewed" (2 Cor. 5: 17). Let's unite ourselves together under the gentle yoke of Christ and let's strengthen ourselves into Christ's love. This is for it has been said: "God is love" (1 Jn. 4: 8). So, if you say that somebody has love, let him have nothing that Christ hates[171]. Let's strive and clean our heart up of the former man who hates God. This is for "we are dwelling places (churches) of His" (2 Cor. 6: 16) and God won't dwell in a place that is filled up with the ugly stench of the passions.

Therefore, let's enter our tiny dwelling place and let's appease ourselves in there[172], for it has been made as big as we need it; and let's pray for our quiet life to be according to His will, by glorifying the Holy and the righteous Trinity. You enter, therefore, and you surrender me too to God and no longer get yourself disturbed by asking me and by writing me. This is because I too am busy now.

I am sending you the prayer which you have asked me for, knowing that I am but "dust and ashes" (Gen. 18: 27). I am not sending it to you as one who is worthy, but as one who is unworthy, for I am unclean and debtor in all things, and I am sending it to you only in order not to disregard the commandment that says: "To everyone who asks from you, you give him" (Mt. 5: 12). And am sending it to you for that love into Christ. When you receive it, pray for me. And pray for: "our toil not to be in vain" (1 Thes. 3: 5), but to be (fruitful) into Christ Jesus our Lord Who it is due the glory forever. Amen.

72. (V. 168) Some ill old man named Andrew, who lives in the congregational monastery, he confessed to the same Great Oldman some of his secrets and he also thanked him for being found worthy of living near to him; also, about his illness…

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[171] He who believes in Christ, let him show that he no longer has anything ugly in him.

[172] That is a practice developed in the prayer done within heart by the hesychasts from the Century XIV. You appease yourself within your heart, for you will encounter God within your heart, by withdrawing yourself from all the worries related to the world. Our heart is the tiny temple where God lives within, and we will meet God if we appease on ourselves. But our heart – our temple – has been created big enough for accommodating God within. Our temple is tiny but it is opened to infinite.

The answer of Barsanuphius: If you truly believe that God is the One Who has brought you here, then you will entrust Him the taking care of yourself, by throwing upon Him all your worries (Ps. 54: 25[173]; 1 Pt. 5: 7). And He will order your thing as He wishes. And if you doubt about a certain thing, or about your bodily illness, or about some souly passions, you must take care of yourself by your own, as you know. This is for the doubt that appears in him who has left all the thing in the care of God, in case he has a minor annoyance, it will always make him say: "If I took care of my body, I wouldn't reach to suffer thus"[174]. But he who gives himself to God wholeheartedly, he must surrender yourself all the way to death. This is for God know more than we know what is beneficial to our soul and body. And the more God allows somebody to be tormented by his body, the more alleviation God will bring to that man of his committed sins[175]. This is for God doesn't ask from you anything but thanking and patience and prayer for forgetting your sins.

But take heed at how proud I am, because while being I the mockery of the devils and by reckoning I that I have that love according to God, I am defeated: for I am telling you: "I bear half of your burden and regarding the future may God help us"[176]. I have spoken like a mindless, by telling you these

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[173] In KJB we have: Ps. 55: 22: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."; in ROB we have: Ps. 54: 25: "Throw towards the Lord your worry and He will feed you; He won't ever give wobbling to the righteous." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[174] The less you believe that God takes care of your things, the more you will take care of yourself. This is lest, by coming to you, still, some upset consequently to your decision to let everything in the care of God, some doubt to engulf you that you haven't done right by totally letting yourself in the care of God. Besides, when you do not fully believe that God will take care of you, it will necessarily appear the worry for taking care of yourself. On the other hand, a weak faith diminishes also objectively the work of God upon you, because you haven't opened yourself fully to God's work. The faith is the entrance door of God within your being and within your works.

[175] He who surrenders himself, out of a strong faith, in the care of God, let him do that thinking at even enduring the death through his taking care of himself, for only in this he will show his full faith in God and by that he will show his faith that God will escape when it will seem to himself that he can no longer escape by himself. This will be if God wants to escape him.

[176] He fears being there a shameless pride in affirming such a strong faith, so that him no longer be able to despair, despite the whole his worthlessness, or despite the whole pride that could be hidden in claiming such a great faith. Amazing souly analyzes! Amazing and subtle souly complexities! The gentleness of the saint takes here the shape of a paradox: I cannot

things. This is for I know myself as weak and helpless and empty of any good thing. But my shamelessness doesn't allow me to despair. This is for I have my Master full of tenderness and of mercy and of love for people and He stretched His hand to the sinner until the sinner's last breath. Attach yourself to Him and He will fulfill everything we ask from Him or everything we think. Him it is due the glory forever. Amen. Forgive me, brother, and pray for me.

73. (V. 169) Hearing from the Great Oldman: "I bear half of your burden" and getting sad because the Great Oldman didn't promise him the full forgiveness, the old Andrew begged the Oldman for the second time to be merciful to him and to give him the consummate forgiveness through Christ.

The answer of Barsanuphius: I wonder about your love, brother, because you do not understand the things of that love according to God. Firstly, God know that I reckon myself as "dust and ashes" (Job 42: 6) and as being wholly nothing. Though, if I tell to somebody something that is over my measures, or that is over my power, I will do that for I am moved by the love of Christ, knowing that through myself I am nothing and that I am a "worthless servant" (Lk. 17: 10). Therefore, because you didn't understand what I told you, that I am bearing half of your sins, you find out that by saying that I have made you together-partaker with me. And I didn't tell you that I bear a third, so that I would allow you to bear more than I do, and so you would be more burdened. On the other hand, I told you these things in order to cast out my pride from within me. That's why I didn't tell you that I am bearing two thirds, so that I would show myself stronger than you are. This is because such saying would be an image of the vain-glory. I didn't tell you either that I bear your entire burden. This is because that is characteristic to the consummate ones who have reached to be brothers of Christ Who put His soul for us and Who wants them who love to love with a consummate love.

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allow you unassured about my participation to the burden of your troubles or about the help that God will give you, but on the other hand I fear that that will sound like pride, but despite the risk of seeming I proud or tempted by pride, I cannot avoid encouraging you. This still doesn't allow him to tell that brother that the whole burden is his.

And again, on the other hand, if I didn't tell you that, I would leave you outside the spiritual work. So, I do not search for vain-glory by taking everything upon myself. Neither I envy you once I reckon you as partaker to the good-turning[177]. If we are brothers, we will share equally the inheritance of our Father, so that there won't be any injustice between us. And if you want me to take everything upon myself, I accept that too due to my obedience. Forgive me, because my much love drives me to much-speaking. But may this too to be towards your joy into Christ Jesus our Lord Who it is due the glory forever. Amen.

74. (V. 170) The ask of the same brother addressed to the same Great Oldman for the Oldman to pray for him because of the illness that came upon him.

The answer of the Great Oldman Barsanuphius: The Scripture says: "We crossed through fire and through water and You brought us out in order us to breathe" (Ps. 65: 11[178]). They who want to be pleasant to God they must cross through some troubles. How could we bless the holy martyrs for the sufferings they endured for God? Tell to your troubled soul: Isn't more useful to you the fever from now than the Gehenna? Let's not allow ourselves to be discouraged in illness, for the Apostle said: "When I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor. 13: 10). Think that "God examines the hearts and the entrails:" (Ps. 7: 9[179]). Let's be patient, let's endure, let's become disciples of the Apostle, who says: "In sufferance be patient" (Rom. 12: 12), thank God for everything (1 Thes. 5: 18), so that not to happen to us too what it was said: "He will confess to You when you do him good"

[177] If he said that he bears the whole burden of the brother, on one hand he would risk to show a visible pride, and on the other hand he would risk to envy the brother for no longer bearing the burden of his mistakes.

[178] In KJB we have: Ps. 66: 12: "Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place."; in ROB we have: Ps. 65: 11: "You raised people over our heads, we crossed through fire and through water and you brought us out to resting." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[179] In KJB we have: Ps. 7: 9: "Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins."; in ROB we have: Ps. 7: 9: "May the evilness of the sinners come to and end and You strengthen the righteous, You Who examine the hearts and the entrails, You the righteous God." (E. l. t.'s n.)

(Ps. 48: 19[180]). And if you have a bodily health and a small suffering came to you, why wouldn't you remember Job who says: "If I have received from the hand of God the good things, won't I endure the bad things too?" (Job 2: 10). Think at the fact that they who want the resting in everything, they will hear: "You have taken the good thing of yours during your life" (Lk. 16: 25). Let's not get discouraged. We have a merciful God Who knows our helplessness more than we do; and if God, in order to test us, He brings upon us some illness, we have the Apostle offering us the comforting by saying: "Faithful is God Who won't allow you to be tested more than you can endure, but God will bring together with the trial its end too, in order you to be able to endure" (1 Cor. 10: 13). The Lord will strengthen you too who are ill, and him who serves you, and your deeds will be towards the glory of God. Keep your patience all the way to the end. Do not get discouraged. Do not get despaired. This is for close in God Who says: "I won't leave you; I won't forsake you" (Hebr. 13: 5).

Believe me, brothers, that I was mastered by vain-glory, for when I was ill, I never laid down, neither did I leave my handwork, despite great helplessness coming upon myself. But now too, the vain-glory sets up its trap to me. This is because ever since I have entered this monastic cell it hasn't allowed the illness to try me. And I am sad because I want to endure. No suffering comes upon me and I get melted down when hearing: "He who endures all the way to the end, he will be saved" (Mt. 10: 22)[181]. But pray for you to be able to persevere in the hope of that salvation into Christ Jesus our Lord Whom it is due the glory forever. Amen.

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[180] In KJB we have: Ps. 49: 18: "Though while he lived he blessed his soul: and men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself."; in ROB we have: Ps. 48: 19: "Even if his soul will be blessed during his life and he will praise you when you do good to him." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[181] Another nimble play of paradoxes. The Great Oldman deplores the fact that, by giving his previous patience as example to others, he allowed himself to be mastered by vain-glory. But he was unable to leave the addressee unstraightened by the example of his patience. But he complains that since he has locked himself in his monastic cell no trial of illness affected him, so that he had not occasion to be patient. And without patience, how could he be saved? Still, on one hand, he fears to desire for the illness to come upon him, by affirming that if he was able to endure it, he would appear like one who searches for vain-glory. On the other hand, he fears that his high-living could stop the illness to come to him. That's why he called the monastic cell which he locked in, as the cell of the vain-glory.

75. (V. 171) The same old man, still sick, he begged the Great Oldman to pray for him, in order him to be found worthy of being helped by God.

The answer of Barsanuphius. Once you have God, you do not fear, but you throw all your worries upon Him and He will take care of you (Ps. 54: 25[182]); 1 Pt. 5: 7). Don't you know that if this earthly house of our tent gets undone, we will have as building from God a house not made by hand, and eternal, in heavens?" (2 Cor. 5: 1). Believe without doubting, and God will help you. This is for God is merciful. Him it is due the glory forever. Amen.

76. (V. 172) The same old man, by living together with a certain brother who was sick too, and he asked the other Oldman to pray for him.

The answer of John: The Lord said: "Into your patience you will gain your souls" (Lk. 29: 19). And the Apostle, following Him, he said: "You need patience" (Hebr. 10: 36). And the prophet said: "Waiting, I was waiting for the Lord and He looked at me" (Ps. 39: 1[183]). Our sweet Lord said: "He who will endure all the way to the end, that one will be saved" (Mt. 10: 22). Both of you must persevere in patience, giving thanks and looking at the holy power of God that comes from above. This is for all these things are for your testing. Take vigil on the things we said: "Tempt me, Lord, and forgive me" (Ps. 25: 2[184]).

77. (V. 173) The question of the same old man addressed to the same Great Oldman: For my thought tells me that I cannot

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[182] In KJB we have: Ps. 55: 22: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."; in ROB we have: Ps. 54: 25: "Throw your worry towards the Lord and He will feed you; he won't ever give wobbling to the righteous." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[183] In KJB we have: Ps. 40: 1: "I WAITED patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me,"; in ROB we have: Ps. 39: 1: "Waiting, I was waiting for the Lord and He leaned towards me." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[184] In KJB we have: Ps. 26: 2: "Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart."; in ROB we have: Ps. 25: 2: "Examine me, Lord, and test me; set my entrails and my heart in fire." (E. l. t.'s n.)

be saved, pray for me, you merciful Father, and tell me what must I do, for I am impeded from fasting.

The answer of Barsanuphius: God of the heavens and of the earth may give to you and to me the unworthy, to find mercy at that time and to daringly stand before His fearsome and glorious judgment throne. My beloved brother, for we have such a merciful God, you must not throw yourself into despair. This is because seeing you fallen into despair will be the great joy of the devil. You must trust our Lord. This is for nobody will be pulled out of the Lord's sheep flock - for He is our God – if we endure in this place all the way to the end. This is for there are some people in this place who have much daring towards God and they persevere in their prayers addressed to God so that not to be separated from them those who are united with them in this blessed place; but as they remain together in that place chosen by God to be His name called there, likewise they to remain together in the future too[185].

Therefore, you the most-honored, do not fear, for I the helpless and all-unimportant, I have received the assurance that you will be counted and written down together with the blessed flock of Christ, and how much more were entrusted of that the saints of God who were worthy of Him? Therefore, you must wait for the lord, and you must hope in Him. And about the bodily fasting, you mut not be sad, because of fasting bodily is nothing without fasting spiritually. This is for "not the things entering (without pleasure) the man defiled the man, but the things coming out of man" (Mk. 7: 15). On the other hand, God

[185] They who are weaker spiritually, if they remain united with them who are spiritually stronger – and that depend on living in the same place – the weaker will rejoice themselves too in the future life of the good things which the stronger will rejoice of, as well. By loving the stronger, by honoring the stronger, the weaker receive within them something from the stronger. There will take place a communication of the soul state from the more advanced to the lass advanced. The weaker won't be separated from the stronger not even when within the stronger will be overpoured the whole knowledge and consummation of the full communion with God. There is an interior communion among those who are on the higher and on the lower spiritual levels. This implies a great responsibility of the stronger ones for the weaker ones; the stronger ones must make themselves loved by the weaker ones for the way they behave to the weaker. Besides, this fact is an unavoidable consequence of the high-quality of their souly state. But that doesn't spare the weaker ones of opening their soul with understanding towards the better ones. Thus, if there are in a certain place a few who are spiritually very strong, all of those living there can be saved. But if there are not such strong ones, by living together only weak ones, they can ever-multiply the evil in all of them, by the bad examples they give to one another.

has given to the monk, as helmsman, the right-reckoning (the power of discernment). You discern therefore, my beloved one, whom asks God to give alms, the poor or the rich? This is for he says: "Do not cease to do good to the needy, as you have at hand" (Prov. 3: 27). So, God doesn't ask them who are sick in their body to restrain themselves, but he asks that to the powerful and healthy in their body. Descend, be a little indulgent with your body. This is for that won't be a sin. God won't ask from you the restraint for God knows the helplessness sent to you by Him.

Therefore, you must thank in all God's things (1 Thes. 5: 18). This is for the giving of thanks will raise to God the prayer for your helplessness. Take off you, therefore, your former man who gets corrupted together with the lusts of the deceit, and you must put on the new man who is built according to God (Eph. 4: 22-24). And you must rejoice yourself into the Lord, gladdening yourself together with His saints who are always rejoicing. Who can understand that? Who can intuit the untold joy of the saints? Their indescribable joy? The unimaginable light? Who is Him who unveiled to the saints, even from here, His wonderful and glorious mysteries and the glory and the resting waiting for them, and the image estranging their mind from this world, so that the saints always see themselves as in heavens, together with Christ and with the angels? They are not bothered by hunger, nor by thirst, neither by anything earthly. This is for they have been freed of all burdens and passions and sins. Or, according to eth Scripture's words: "Where their treasure is, there will be their mind" (Mt. 6: 21). He who has reached this, he knows what he hears. But what should I do because of not having I anything done? But I do not despair. This is for God is powerful to place us among those who will find mercy into Christ Jesus our Lord Whom it is due the glory together with the Father and with the Holy Ghost, forever. Amen. May our Lord hear His true servants and Him to send you quickly His great mercy, and Him to give me I to know so that "I to be able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2: 4). Pray for me and embrace my brother, who is together-servant with you, and pray him to do the same thing for my fewness.

78. (V. 174) Question addressed to the same Great Oldman: I awfully suffer of rheumatism in my feet and in my hands and I fear that not to be from demons, please tell me Father if that is so. But what should I do, because it bothers me so much, because I cannot fast and I am often forced to eat. And what is the fact that I see in my dreams like some wild beats on a wall? I beg you, Master, for the Lord, send me a small blessing out of your food and water, so that I will be comforted by taking them.

Do not be sand, my beloved one. That is not from demons, but it is a rheumatism allowed by the pedagogical will of God towards bettering us up, if we accept it with thankfulness. Wasn't Job true friends with God? And the end of his patience brought him to an unimaginable glory.

Therefore, you must endure a little and you will se ethe glory of God.

Regarding the fasting, do not be sad. This is for, as I told you before, God doesn't ask us something over our power. What is the fasting else but a pedagogy of the body, towards the obedience of the healthy body and towards weakening its tendency towards passions. This is for he says: "When I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor. 12: 10). And the illness is above the pedagogical rebuking, and it will be reckoned to him who endures it patiently while giving thanks to God for it, instead of ascesis, or even more than that, and he will collect out of this patience the fruit of his salvation. So, you must not weaken your body by fasting, when your body is weak by itself. Give thanks to God for you have been delivered from the toil of the restraint. I am telling you tenfold: do not get sad. If you eat, you won't be condemned. This is for that doesn't come to us out of the devils' work, neither out of the drowsiness of our thought, but in order us to be tested and towards our soul's benefit.

And the dreams with wild beasts are hallucinations form the devils which want to delude you through those to believe that your illness is from them. But our Lord will empty them of power by the word of His mouth (2 Tim. 2: 8) through the prayers of the saints[186]. Amen.

[186] The name of our Lord Jesus Christ is fearful to the devils and to them who allow themselves to be dominated by the passions from the devils. But His name is fearful due to its gentleness and cleanness of his humanity, one that means in the same time a freedom from

Do not get sad. This is for "him who is loved by the Lord, the Lord rebukes him, and the Lord whips anyone who receives Him" (Prov. 3: 12). I believe that God will have mercy also on this bodily illness of yours, as He wishes. May the Lord give you power and strength for you to endure it. Amen. I am sending you a little water out of the pitcher of our bless Father Euthimios. I am sending you also a little blessing out of my food, so that you too to bless this food, Pray for me, you all-desired brother.

79. (V. 174) The ask of the same old man addressed to another Oldman: Pray for me Father for my grave illness and tell me about diet. Isn't that a mistake eating quickly and often? And about singing psalms: what it is the extent which I can pass over it to? Because I cannot sing. Plan me, Master, and water me (1 Cor. 3: 6-8). Explain to me what our saint Father told me that "the Lord will have mercy on you": did he say that about my death?

The answer of John: I kept my silence because of not knowing what to say to you, and not because of hiding something good from you. Why do you ask for bread from him who eats carobs? And I am not writing to you for, despite I am nothing, I rejoice together with you of the things written to you by our blessed Oldman. This is for he nourished you with the strong food of the spiritual bread. Why do you need for my watery milk that cause you disgust? Neither the Scripture nor the Fathers impeded the descent to the body, one done not out of pleasure but with right-reckoning (discernment). So, as I told you before, if you do not eat and when you do not drink in a wasting manner, neither out of pleasure, the food and the drink won't bring you condemnation, for they won't be towards offense. About them the Lord said that they won't defile the man (Mk. 7: 15).

Regarding the singing of Psalm, or regarding the Liturgy, do not get troubled. This is for God won't ask them from you if you are ill. He who takes heed at himself, he will cause top himself the suffering of the ascesis for the Lord and for his own salvation… But you have the suffering of your illness instead of

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everything that is evil, and an absolute power against the evil. In Christ the humane existence is not submitted to any enslavement.

the suffering of your ascesis. Regarding your illness, do not get discouraged, for the lord won't forsake you, but the Lord will use your illness as only Him knows, towards your benefit, in order you not to suffer overmeasure.

And the Oldman didn't say to you about death, but only about the mercy that God will have on your love. Therefore, I beg you to endure it as he told you and you will truly see the glory of God.

Regarding the planting, if he who plants and waters is nothing, and for you put those on my behalf, you better have God instead of me – because I am nothing –, for God give the growth and He shelters and He does with you according to His mercy. Therefore, you must rejoice His kindness and encourage yourself and be strong in Him. And pray for me so that His mercy be made with me.

80. (V. 176) The same old man tormented by illness asked the same Oldman to pray for him.

Ane answer of John: Your illness is towards your testing. Endure it while giving thanks to God and God will quickly have mercy on you. I embrace you into the Lord and I ask you to pray for me.

81. (V. 177) The same one askes the Great Oldman the same thing.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Behold that brother John too, he told him that you that God will quickly have mercy on you. So, because I am all-unimportant, what could I say to more to him? I today am still rejoicing for I believe that God will send him today the relief through the prayers of His saints. Pray, my beloved ones, for me.

82. (V. 178) After this answer, that ill brother got immediately healthy in that very day and he sent thanks to the Oldman announcing him the mercy that God has on him.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Our Lord Jesus Christ said to His disciples: "Do not rejoice for the devils will obey you in MY name, but for your names are written in heavens" (Lk. 10: 20). So, us too, if we jump and shout out for the help that came to our body in the name of God and in the name of Jesus Christ Who is the Protector of our souls, what will we say about the cleaning of all passions which will be given to our soul into the fearsome and glorified name of His? How many voices, tongues, thoughts, and hearts will be able to give Him the due doxology[187]? But I reckon that is not even in the incorporeal beings[188]. This is because the godhead is non-comprisable. Him it is due the glory and the mastery and the power, forever. Amen.

83. To this old man a certain brother told him: "behold that with the prayers of the saints you have been renewed, old man. And the old man answered to the brother: "Each time you have been telling me this word, even despite this time if the fourth time, I have been noticing that the devils are crushing my body". And the other Oldman was asked about that too.

The answer of John: This thing comes out of envy and of faithlessness. Out of envy because the devils do not rejoice about the good done to the man. Out of faithlessness, because by seeing the illness they to doubt in their heart[189].

[187] They will raise His doxology for the countless benefactions done to the diverse creatures, which will extoll him with the whole their being. But they will extoll Him full of bewilderment especially for the supreme accomplishment of the human which they will see it in Him, one that will be overpoured as a gift within those creatures too. This is for those creatures will be elevated with their sight and with their existence on a plan which we cannot now even to suspect it.

[188] The creatures will extoll the godhead. But that won't mean that the godhead will wholly be within them or that the creatures will wholly be understood by the creatures. The glory of the godhead will irradiate within the beings and the power of the godhead will work within the beings. But the godhead will remain, in the same time, eternally above them.

[189] That brother often told that old man: "Behold, you have been healed", but he was telling that because of the envy sown within him by the devil. But that brother told that to the old man also with a certain doubt, and that caused within the old man too, the doubt that he became healthy. And this doubt, as weakening of the faith, it made the old man to feel himself as sick again. The doubt, at its turn, it causes illness too. If you say: "I do not think that I am healthy" you will truly feel a beginning of getting sick.

84. (V. 180) The question of the same one towards the same Oldman: Tell me, Father, do we have our faithlessness within us or the devils bring us to faithlessness?

The answer of John: The devils bring us the faithlessness out of envy. If we accept it, that will make us devil's servants and partakers.

85. (V. 181) The question of the same one addressed to the Great Oldman: If I got relieved of my illness, how will I have to spend my day?

Answer: Rejoice into the Lords! And I am saying you again: rejoice (Phil. 4: 4). I have been gladdened by your question; better said, your questions rejoiced God and His angels.

Regarding what you have asked me, our Lord said: "These things you ought to do and those things you ought not to leave" (Mt. 23: 3). You must sing for a little while, and you must tell a few prayers by heart, and you must examine and guard your thoughts. This is for he who has many kinds of food on his table he feels the pleasure for eating out of many. And he who eats a sole kind of food on each day, he won't only feel no pleasure by eating it, but he might become, in time, even disgusted by it. It is likewise in this regard too. It stays in the power of the consummate ones to get accustomed to be shared with the same food on each day without getting disgusted of it. Regarding the singing and the uttering by heart, do not tie on yourself but do those according to the power given you by the Lord. And do not deprive yourself of reading and of prayer. Do a little of this one, and that do a little of that one. And so, you will spend your day being you pleasant to God. Our consummate Fathers did not have a rule, for the whole their day was a canon: to sing a little, to utter a little prayer by heart, to examine their thoughts for a little, and to occupy themselves a little with the food. And they did all of these with the fear of God. This is for it was said: "Everything you do, do them towards the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10: 31). May our Lord Jesus guard us against all evil. Amen.

86 (the V is missing) The question of the same one addressed to the same Oldman: How must we examine our thoughts? And how must we guard ourselves against the slavery to the passions?[190]

Answer: Examining the thought means that, when the thought comes, you will take heed at what is born out of that thought. I am giving you this example: suppose that somebody rebuked you and you are tormented by the thought to answer him who rebuked you. Then you tell to your thought: "If I answered him, I would trouble him and he would get upset with me. So, I better endure for a little and it will pass from me". If there occurs not a thought against somebody, but a thought in itself, you must examine this thought as well and tell him: "Where will it finish this evil thought? It will end in Gehenna". And that thought will leave you in peace. And do the same with all your thoughts: immediately that a thought occurs, you will examine it and you will cut if off. Regarding the slavery, one need much watchfulness for, as the Father said, if a thought attracts your mind towards fornication, you will direct that thought towards cleanness; if towards the covetousness of the belly, you will lead that thought towards temperance; if towards hatred, you will guide it towards love, and you will do likewise with all the other passions. Do not get sad, for you will find much mercy according to the promises made to you. Therefore, "if we live, let's live for our Lord, and if we die, let's die for our Lord" (Rom. 14: 8).

87 (V. 182) Question of the same brother towards the same Great Oldman: Tell me, Father, what stage of consummation belongs to, the fact of prying ceaselessly, (1 Thes. 5: 17) and must I keep a canon (a rule, a program)?

[190] The fight of the man against his passion's it is his struggle for his freedom. The most difficult it is to liberate yourself from what enslaved you from within yourself, or, better said, to liberate yourself from the unseen powers which stir up these passions by wakening up your inferior impulses from within yourself. It is goof you to reach to do what you want without feeling that you are forced to do that; that is to be master over everything from within you, to be free of yourself. You are yourself when you are free of yourself as well. I am free when I do what I want to do, without being forced at all by what is within me. But this means doing the good and maintaining yourself in the state of doing the good without difficulty. There is the greatest of your power in that. Only the evil enslaves you under the appearance of being good.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Rejoice, brother, into our Lord; rejoice, my beloved one, into our Lord; rejoice, into our Lord, you the together-inheritor[191]! The ceaseless prayer belongs to the measure of the dispassion[192]. But then one becomes aware of the coming of the Holy Ghost Who teaches the man everything (Jn. 14: 26), and therefore the things of the prayer as well[193]. This is for the Apostle says: "And I do not know how I ought to pray, but the Ghost prays for us with untold sighs" (Rom. 8: 27). What I would speak you about the buildings of Rome, for you were there not yet?

That man who lives in quietude, especially that man who is sick and lays on his bed, he won't have any canon. But you be like a man who eats and who drinks as he needs. And when you feel the need for reading and when you see repentance within your heart, read as much as you can read. Do the same regarding the singing. But keep the giving of thanks and the "Lord, have mercy" according to your power and do not fear. "For the gifts from God won't be taken back" (Rom. 11: 29).

88. (V. 183) The same brother after he got healthy, because of experiencing a helplessness in his stomach, he sent supplication to the Great Oldman for the Oldman to pray for him,

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[191] You are together-inheritor of the Kingdom of the Holy Trinity, with me, in your quality as son of the Father, or the supreme Emperor, submitted to no coercion. Rejoice of your freedom which you are called to, in this quality of yours as inheritor and together-master in His Kingdom, where there is not coercion. This freedom is one with the dispassion. That's why the dispassion is announced in the next phrase. We are together inheritors of the Kingdom of Heavens whose Emperor is our Father from heavens.

[192] You won't be able to pray ceaselessly as long as you haven't liberated yourself from passions. This is because any occurrence of the passion will stop the prayer, it will take you into slavery breaking you from God Who the freedom is within. Only in prayer, as act of love from God Who doesn't take you into submission as the passion does, only in prayer it is manifested the full freedom from ourselves. Staretz Gheorghe from Cernica Monastery said, at his turn: the ceaseless prayer belongs to dispassion.

[193] The freedom cannot be but into the Holy Ghost. This is for the Holy Ghost, the Supreme Ghost Who is free of any coercion, and He is not submitted to any passion and to no law which is not given you by Him. And the Holy Ghost can infuse His freedom to the man too, for the man is endowed with a ghost. "Where the Ghost of the lord is, there the freedom is" (1 Cor. 3: 17). That's why, there where the Ghost is, there is too the possibility of the ceaseless prayer, of the loving dialogue with God. The Holy Ghost instills us with the ghost of loving and beloved sons of the Father, ghost of freedom and ghost of love towards our Father and towards Christ our Brother. That's why when we pray, the Ghost prays within us (Rom. 8: 26).

saying: "Starting with midnight my mouth and my eyelids get dry, and my hands and my feet get weakened. And when I wake up my whole body shakes for about an hour, starting from my stomach. Then I get drowsy and I become like mud. And I want to utter a psalm but I cannot utter it with my mouth. And if I want to say a psalm in my heart, I will fall asleep. And I no longer know what I should do, for I am seeing my salvation endangered. Be king to me, Father, for our Lord, and pray for me and explain to me what is happening to me?

The answer of Barsanuphius: This state is a little helplessness of your stomach. But it is also a heaviness caused by the devils. Do not take heed at any of them. This is for he says: "And they who belong to Christ they have crucified their body together with its passions and lusts" (Gal. 5: 24). Behold that the Oldman prays for you. You too must cry a little in your prayer, while giving thanks to God, and pray for you to receive mercy and He will have mercy on you. This is for we have a very merciful Master and a lenient Father. And nobody can, either among the Powers from above or among the servants from below, to worthily describe His kindness and how much He wants to have mercy on the mankind[194]. That's why God is long-patient with us, so that our patience to increase in order us to be saved[195]. This is for he taught us so, saying: "Into your patience you will gain your souls" (Lk. 21: 19). Therefore, do not get discouraged my brother, for Jesus has started to work His mercy on you. Him it is due the glory, forever. Amen. Pray for me.

[194] One cannot describe the godlike mercy, neither can one describe how much God wants to have mercy on us. Our mercy is only a faded image of God's mercy. This is for the mercy depends on freedom. And the mercy will not be able to elevate us into freedom if we do not strive too to gain our freedom. I cannot give somebody his freedom of himself. Our freedom can be strengthened by God's love for us and by our love for God. But the love cannot be imposed forcedly, but it only is accepted willingly.

[195] Our patience is fueled up out of God's patience, God's patience being also the endless power for the steadfastness into good. If God has patience, why won't we be patient as well, especially for He give patience to us too? It depends only on us to remain in connection with God. In the strength of the patience, it is affirmed and it increases the freedom, the non-ceding to whatever would pressure us, especially when we know that the difficulty we are encountering it is approved by God. And the salvation consists of the consummate and definitive freedom lived in the loving communion with God.

89. (184) Question of the same brother towards the other Oldman: I wonder what said our Father for: "Jesus has started to work His mercy on you"?

The answer of John: He said that for the prosperity and for the great benefit of your soul, for you are in a together-living with such people, whom you will resurrect together with, on that day, into great joy, if you will keep to the very end the patience and the giving of thanks.

90. (V. 185) The ask of the same brother addressed to the Great Oldman: I believe that all things you tie on earth they will be tied in heavens too; and that all things you untie on earth, they will be untied in heavens as well (Mt. 18: 18). I beg you, Father, for the mercy of God, help my helplessness because I am limping with my soul and with my body and I trouble the brothers whom I am living together with. Please ask God I to fulfill my needs through myself, so that my brother no longer to be forced to bear my burdens. This is for I believe that all the things you ask from God, God will give those to you. Bear together with my helplessness, Father, and forgive me.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, you small key opens my door[196]. This is for I am mindless and I cannot endure hiding from you the wonders of God. So, if somebody heard my words and he wonders about those, he won't be able to say anything else but: "He has gone out of his mind". I reckon that such a man doesn't know that "all things are possible to God and nothing is impossible to God" (Job 42: 2). That's why, as our Lord worked through His first disciples, by rising up a man with palsy (Acts 9: 33-34) and resurrecting Tabitha who dies (Acts 9: 40), likewise He can work through His disciples form now too. I am speaking in front of Him and I am not lying, for I know at this time and in this blessed place a man who can rise dead people in the name of our Master Jesus Christ, and he can banish aways devils and he can heal incurable diseases and he can work mightier things than the Apostles worked, as confesses Him Who has given to that man the charisma (the gift), of better said the charismas (the gifts). And what are these

[196] In Paterikon, at Abba Peter.

things worked today in the name of Jesus? These are things which he cannot be helped by his own power to[197]. This is for he is able to stop wars too, and he can open and close the sky, as Elijah did. This is for the lord always has true servants, whom He calls servants and sons (Gal. 4: 7). And even if they are envied by the enemy, by the grace of God the enemy cannot harm them. This is for the ship sailed through the storm, the soldier crossed through wars, the helmsman crosses over swirls, the plowman weathered out the bad weather, the merchant crossed through the midst of the thieves, and the monk has consummated himself into loneliness[198].

But who won't say by hearing such more-than-huge things, that I haven't gone out my mind? And I truly have gone out of my mind. But I do not confess about myself, but about somebody else. And if somebody wants to say that I have gone out of my mind, let him say it[199]. So, if somebody aspires to reach this measure, let him not hesitate. I have told these things to your love, in order to assure you that it is possible you to reach what you wish. This is for, if I begged God for you and God has bestowed you the heavenly and untold and eternal goods "which the eye hadn't seen and the ear hasn't heard and to the man's heart they haven't ascended, which God has prepared them for those who love Him" (1 Cor. 2: 9), and if those will be your for you have kept the teachings, how much more will there be no difficulty for us to ask God and us to receive the gift for you not longer be ill even for one day[200]?

But Jesus knows better than us what each man needs: one to take the payment for his patience as Job; others, to take their payment for their service, as Eulogius from among advocates (Lausiac History 21: 3-14). So, you must not ask for anything from God, through His servants, except for help and obedience. This is for "He who will endure to the very end, he will be saved" (Mt. 10: 22) into Christ Jesus our Lord. This is for

[197] It seems that Barsanuphius hinted to himself. He cannot hide the wonders of God, but by doing so he reckons himself as mindless. Christ Himself confesses that to Barsanuphius.

[198] Here is given also the condition for one to reach such a charisma: the total resting from passions.

[199] The note to the Greek edition: "I reckon that the saint says these things about himself, but he doesn't admit that openly, because of his humbleness, and that's why he says that his words are about somebody else".

[200] If God gives us the goods of the eternal and unspeakable goods, cannot Him give us the much smaller gift of the health?

He will take care of us forever. Amen. Don't you know what the Lord told to Saint Paul who asked Him to take away his sufferance?: "It is enough to you My grace" (2 Cor. 12: 9). Did the Lord say that to Paul because of His lack of love? Or because He knew that that was in Paul's benefit? Remember that "are worthy the sufferings of the time of the glory that will be unveiled to us" (Rom. 8: 18). Forgive me and pray for me the wicked, in order I too to keep these measures to the very end. This is for he who keeps these measures he has already become brother to Jesus. Him it is due the glory forever. Amen.

91. (V. 186) The ask of the same brother addressed to the same Great Oldman about finding mercy on that day.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother and beloved into Christ, Andrew! I wonder about your love, or better said about your simplicity that doubts the promises. The Lor said to Philip: "I have been all the time together with you and you haven't known Me, Philip?" (Jn. 14: 9). Believe me, brother, that we will have everything promised to us. And if you wish, we will have even a little more than that. This is for one can achieve a little mercy. But one can also achieve great mercy. And Davis chose the great mercy (Ps. 50: 30[201]). So, him who wants the great mercy, he will find that through humbleness and gentleness and patience and through other similar gifts[202]. If you find mercy, you will have found it out by the prayers of the saints. But choosing the little or the great mercy it depends on you. Choose whichever you want[203]. Live with another in peace and

[201] Unidentified. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[202] If you have mercy on other, you will have that for you, for your mercy on others moves within your being and it will sweeten yourself. If you love others, yourself will have the joy of the sweetness of that love. Asking God for mercy means not feeling yourself capable of reaching that high state by yourself. It means asking for sweetness that makes yourself happy in the first place. It means humbleness and love for others (contrary to Nietzche who despised the Christians because of asking God for mercy).

[203] Even in the prayers of the saints done for you it is present their generous mercy on you and they have, by their closeness to Him Who is the source of the mercy, this generosity in common with His generosity. He who asks God for mercy, he will become capable of bestowing himself even to death, so that he gains a supreme strength, and not a state of fearful servant as Nietzsche said. And when the mercy is steadfast, it gets spread among persons as a contagious feeling. Unintentionally, you will be contaminated by another's mercy on you. But you also can push the brake to that, by receiving it but giving back less than you have

holiness, by humbly enduring your neighbor like a monk as you are, so that you will be an example as a monk and as s spiritually advanced. Have your brother near to you as a son and as a servant, and if he mistakes in something or if he loses something, you will advise him and you will show him his mistake, so that he could correct himself. And pray for me.

92. (V. 187) The same brother towards the same Great Old Man, given me a canon (a rule) as to a beginner who hasn't received the schism yet, and pray for me, for that brother who loves me he troubles me and he rests the other brother.

The answer of Barsanuphius: All-beloved brother, you have written me a thing that exceeded my power: to command you a thing which I won't be able to bear myself either. You have asked me to give you a canon as to a beginner, who hasn't taken yet the schism, and the rule of the beginner is this one: to live in much humbleness, not to value himself in any regard, not to say "what is this?" or "what is this for?". But into much obedience and submission not to reckon himself as equal to somebody. Him not to say "somebody is honored, why am I not honored the same? That one is spared in everything, why am I not so?". Even if he is pay attention in everything, he must not resist. These are the deeds of the true beginner who truly wants to be saved. But these things are difficult for you to bear now, both for the helplessness of your body and also because of your old age. So, you have asked me to bear that what is heavier, and I am giving you that what is easier, not by forcing, you, but by advising you. This is because, if God wants that brother to rest that other brother and to trouble you, and if God has given that brother to feel that he must do such, you will have to endure and do not get troubled. This is for by enduring the troubled we will gain our souls (Lk. 21: 19). And we cannot become partakers to the sufferings of Christ but by enduring the troubles[204]. Keep thanking in everything (1 Thes. 5: 18).

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received. Instead, you can also allow it to get as wide as possible within your being which the mercy is wakened up by another's mercy in. In perseveringly asking God for mercy, it is shown also a power of unquenched love of the man for his fellow humans.

[204] Enduring the troubles makes us partakers to Christ's sufferings. And this places us in communion with Himself. By this we too are imparted with His power for being elevated above ourselves, and not only above the pleasures but also above the sufferings which can

This is for the giving of thanks mediates for our helplessness in front of God[205].

Let your canon be you to sit and take heed at your thoughts and you to have the fear of God, while you saying to yourself: "How have I lived the past time? I am going to repent myself at least now, because my exit has come closer; and I will endure my neighbor and the annoyances and the trials from him, until the Lord will have mercy on me and He will take me to the state of the non-getting-angry and He will take out from me my envy that is the cub of the devil". Spend the few days left to you by examining your thoughts and by resisting them who bring you disturbance and advising your son in the fear of God and by remembering his mistakes, because you know that he is a man too and therefore submitted to temptations. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, may give us state of peace and state of together-dwelling into the fear of God. I wonder about the fact that, you read the Scripture that says: "Brothers, rejoice when you fall in diverse temptations" (Jas. 1: 2) but you still are disturbed by the almost-unimportant things. You must at least know where you are and what power you have and the iron-neck will get humbled and the peace of the Lord will be with you. Forgive me and pray for me, in order I not to hear the word: "You who teach another, don't you teach yourself?" (Rom. 2: 21). And "what will I answer to love?" But the mercy for anybody is at our Master God (from *Paterikon*, the saying no. 318).

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have a great power upon us. Having us mercy on others it will liberate us from both pleasures and sufferings. This conception is totally different form the Protestant conception according to which Christ has done everything for us and we have nothing left to do. In the teaching of the New Testament and of the Holy Fathers, Christ has suffered for us but not in order to spare us from doing anything else, but in order Him to ennoble our being. BY placing in His human nature His power for defeating the passions, He communicates that power to us too. Otherwise, Christ wouldn't have made Himself the beginner of a new life of the humanity. The Occidental mankind has renounced to any self-improvement effort out of the power of Christ. That has brought them to a great weakness, or to a great ethical indifferentism and libertinage.

[205] Giving thanks to God, it will help us to be saved even if we cannot do anything positive for God. This is for, as when you praise God for the good things you use the powers He has given to you, likewise you use those powers when you praise God for the strength that He has given you for you to endure the illness and the helplessness which He allowed to come upon you. See also in this the God's wisdom and care for you. Thus, you can be saved through those too. It is shown a power and a strengthening of ours given us by God, also in the fact that we thank for sufferings, for helplessness, and for hardships. It is shown thus a greater strengthening than in simply enduring those.

93. (V. 193) The question of the same brother towards the same Great Oldman: My thought tells me: "You have told to your brother once and for ten times. From now on, let him do whatever he wants. And no longer take care of him, as the Fathers said".

The answer of Barsanuphius: My all-beloved brother who are of one soul with me, may be with you the peace given by the Lord to His Saints. This is for He gave them, firstly, the peace, by removing from them all the bodily thoughts and all the devilish thoughts, in order their hearts to be clean and able to receive, with cleanness, the teachings and the commandments of their Master.

Therefore, you too, my beloved brother, by receiving this fearsome peace[206], not from me, but from our Savior Jesus Christ, you must prepare yourself with sapience and without disturbance for hearing and for doing (that what you hear). This is for you know that I want to take you and to wing you up towards heavens. But the devil surrounds you from all quarters through envy and anger[207].And if the devil doesn't find room, he will mock you through insignificant things and he wages war to you through those insignificant things and he disturbs you are your brother through those insignificant things. And this is because I told you in my previous letters you to tell the brother his mistakes and to advise him; better said, this is because I haven't told you how to do that correctly, and you have despised your brother, or, even if I told you that correctly, you were defeated in war. And that's why the devil rejoices and comes, by having the bitter rights upon you, and says to you: "You have told him once and for ten times; let him do, from now on, whatever he wants and you no longer take care of him, as the Fathers said". And the devil laughs at you by that too[208].

[206] The peace of Christ is a fearsome peace because of being achieved through harsh efforts and it scares him who thinks as starting to achieve that peace through such efforts and by enduring trials and hardships. It is a scary peace, therefore, to the addicted ones and to the demons upholding them in their addiction and who rejoice of the war and of the enmity among people.

[207] He who starts advancing into good he will be surrounded by the envy and by the anger of the devil, but also of many of his fellow humans whom he works among.

[208] The addressee strives to advance himself in his spiritual occupations, but the enemy troubles him through insignificant discontents, which the devil causes him through his servant. There is a silence from God when you do not answer him who rebukes you. But there

This is for you are so far from the level of the Fathers, as far as the sky is from earth. Do you want to know why the Lord said about trees that even the bad-trees bring forth fruits (Mt. 7: 17-20)? In order you to find out what has caused your silence form the devil: disturbances, anger. Each time you start doing something by yourself, without asking about that thing, you will be quickly caught in the snare. It happened so to the simple ones because they are untaught. I am going to limpidly show you that in this particular case your long-patience is not according to God[209]. This is because, by pilling up (your upset) for many days, you will empty your barrel in one day. But that patience according to God will keep its silence all the way to the very end. But you, brother, you behave like the master does to his servant: instead of slapping him once a day, by telling him his mistakes and thus to bring the peace, you suffer for many days and then you will hit him in the back (with a deadly hit) and you take his soul away from him.

94. (V. 189) The same brother asked the other Oldman the same thing; and he also asked whether he should move out from his monastic cell, because by doing so he thought that his war (from within his soul) could stop.

The answer of John: If you paid due attention to the answer of the Great Oldman and if you obeyed that what he told you to do by bot valuing yourself in anything and not to search to be equal to anyone, you would find your resting and you wouldn't reach to disturbance; and if that was the case, you wouldn't need me or anyone else. Take heed, brother, at the fact that the demons mock you. You say that the mistakes of your brother are true. But you tell me: do you surely know that those mistakes are true? This is because, by speaking about somebody's mistakes because of suspecting him, some of his mistakes will be proven as not being real. Then, what sort of mistakes our Lord has told the people about, when He said:

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is also a silence from the devil in two cases: when you no longer want to tell him a benevolent word, or to advise him who has upset you; the second case is when you start doing a thing without asking your father-confessor or the father whom you obey to. Both these sorts of silence bring troubles and anger.

[209] When you leave unadvised him who depends on you to be corrected, because of your disgust of telling him anything, that patience of yours won't be from God.

"Amen I am telling you, if you do not forgive their mistakes to the people, neither your heavenly Father will forgive you your mistakes" (Mt. 6: 15)? Which mistakes He talked about? About the real mistakes or about the suspected mistakes? Doubtlessly, the Lord talked about the real mistakes. And again, you have been judging and condemning you brother for three weeks but you do not know that you are throwing yourself in a great damnation? This is because, if you hold your brother accountable for this, God will hold you accountable for your mistakes since your youth and up to now. And where do you leave him who said: "Do not let the sun set upon your anger" (Eph. 4: 26)? Where do you leave the word "bear your burdens to one another!" (Gal. 6: 2)? Where do you leave the letter of the Great Oldman who has given you a rule for living? Instead of thanking him, you answer him with these? Don't you know what was said: "Instead of good things, you have rewarded Me evils" (Ps. 34: 12[210])? And what your brother serves you for? Not for God and for God's love? And why do you hurt his thought? Take heed at the fact that the end is near, as you have heard and as yourself confess it. And the devils do not let you not to value on yourself; and, because of that, you cannot rest yourself[211]. Fight back the thoughts which bring you disturbance. This is for, as the good Oldman showed you, by doing that you will find help[212]. But if you try to help yourself with all sorts of craftsmanships, if you do anything, if you move yourself each time when war and temptation come upon you, that won't leave you except if you fight your evil thoughts. This is for you must unite your small efforts with the prayer of the Saints[213]. This is for "it can do much when it is worked" (Jas. 5: 16). You must tell to your thought: Today I am going to die. Keep the humbleness and you will find resting. May the Lord give His peace to you. Amen.

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[210] In KJB we have: Ps. 35: 12: "They rewarded me evil for good to the spoiling of my soul."; in ROB we have: Ps. 34: 11: "They rewarded me evils for goods and they have exhausted my soul." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[211] The care for valuing yourself, the care for reckoning that you are somebody important, it won't allow you to rest, it won't allow you to be free or to be master over yourself, and it will always disturb you.

[212] He who fights, he will be strengthened, for he received help form above.

[213] There is much that the prayer can do when united with the working, with the toiling.

95. (V. 190) Question of the same brother towards the same Oldman: Father I wanted to correct my brother with the love of God and he didn't accept my correction. And I got disturbed. What should I do, therefore? And if I talked to him as you commanded me, tell me if that won't raise suspicions to somebody?

The answer of John: Because we do not understand what we say, any corrective advice that allows the disturbance entering the mean's heart, that is not an advice according to God, but it is an advice out of the work of the devil who wants to let him think that he is corrected. This is because, if you advised your neighbor according to God, why would you get disturbed? This is for the sadness according to God doesn't allow anybody to get disturbed. But even if him who has been advised towards getting corrected, he leaves and gossips him who advised him, the adviser won't get disturbed but he will bear the burdens of the gossiper. It was shown to us too that this thing was a temptation. But God has emptied this temptation of power, and He is still emptying it. May the Lord give you health to your body and to your soul in order you to understand the craftsmanships of the evil one and so you to be able to get rid of those. Prayer for me. Regarding the dialogue with the brothers, which you have told us about, when the dialogue take place in the love for God, it won't bring offense but building up.

96. (V. 181) The question of the same brother towards the same Oldman: Abba, my brother troubles me much. And if possible, I would gladly change him for another brother. This is for my thought tells me that if I was alone, there wouldn't be any occasion I to be troubled, but I would rather be saved. Tell me if this would be beneficial to me.

The brother of John: Brother, do not get troubled by thinking that you are right when saying "If I was alone, there wouldn't be any occasion I to be troubled, but I rather would get saved". This is because you disregard the Scripture that says:

"Many are the troubled of the righteous" (Ps. 33: 20[214]); and again: "Many are the whippings of the sinner" (Ps. 31: 10[215]). So, either you are righteous or you are sinner, you must endure the trouble. This is because we cannot be without any trouble. The troubles teach us the patience. In this regard, we have as best teacher the Apostle who says: "Be patient into trouble" (Rom. 12: 12). Troubles are waiting for them who will be saved. This is for our Lord said: "Into the world you will have many troubles" (Jn. 16: 33); and again: "Through many troubles you must enter the Kingdom of Heavens" (Jn. 14: 22)[216]. Can you see, my brother, that you have been allowed to be troubled a little by Him Who said: "My soul is saddened to death" (Mt. 26: 38). He did that so that you can find His mercy in exchange for your patience, at that fearful time. This is because, if we want the resting in everything, we will hear: "You have taken the good

[214] In KJB we have" Ps. 34: 19: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."; in ROB we have: Ps. 33: 18: "Many are the troubles of the righteous and from all of those the Lord will deliver them." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[215] In KJB we have: Ps. 32: 10: "Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about."; in ROB we have: Ps. 31: 11: "Many are the beatings of the sinner; and him who hopes in the Lord, he will be surrounded by mercy." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[216] Enduring the troubles is a help for strengthening the human subject. He who endures the troubles, he won't run ways from troubles. He won't give room to weakness or to despair. He who endures the troubles he will learn how to control himself. He who perseveres in enduring, he will reach the supreme level of the human, by being a subject and not an object that is carried here and there unwillingly. And the Kingdom of Heavens is a communion of the free subjects who won't be unwillingly submitted to evil or to the tormenting impatience, it is a Kingdom of the subjects who will folly enjoy the communion with the Father, as sons of the Father of the Supreme Subject, by becoming themselves as masters over themselves like the Supreme Subject is unsubmitted to any force superior to Him. That Kingdom cannot be entered but by the who have found their freedom by enduring their troubles with strength, by enduring the unavoidable annoyances coming from the changing nature of the world and from the still non-consummate state of the fellow humans. Christ Himself gave us example in this regard. And He has given us not only example but also power, by putting in His human nature the whole power of the dispassionate self-mastering by patiently enduring the sufferings and the death. So, thus He founded the Kingdom of Heavens for people, or the Kingdom of the human subjects elevated above their slavery to the inferior passion and above the masteries of the exterior world.

Let's notice that the cutting off of the will and the obedience to them who ask for those in the name of God - Barsanuphius and John highlighted so much the importance of cutting off of the will and the importance of the obedience – are not a slavery, but they are willing deeds of the man freed of himself and freed of the passions of his narrowed egotism, so that the man can live in the broadness of his loving-of-God freedom.

things in your life" (Lk. 16: 25)[217]. Our Master endured all the sufferings for us. Won't us endure too, by remembering those, in order us to be partakers with Him? Take heed that we have received the commandment to give thanks in everything (1 Thes. 5: 18). May not be us attracted to discontent, by the hater of the good, because if that is the case we will lose everything[218].

Regarding the exchange of your brother for another one, it is not a difficult to Abba to appoint another brother to serve you[219]. This is for to him it is the same thing to appoint a brother or another to serve you. But if you will receive another brother and that one too will upset you in some regard, what are you going to do? Despite the fact that the present brother is not especially smart, he still has only a little guilt. I am not telling you this in order to impede you to ask for another brother, but I am advising you to weigh in all the aspects so that you will be able to choose what is good. This is for, as another serves you for God, you too owe to fulfill, at your turn, the law of Christ (Gal. 6: 20). Don't I want you to find resting? God know that, if I could, I would want to serve you myself for all my remining days. But what could I do for I am totally useless? Let's hate the resting of our bod, because God is disgusted by such a resting, because such a resting take us far from God. I have written you these words as to one who is of-one-soul with me. This is for I want us to be troubled a little. This is because without trouble there won't be saddening into the fear of God. Pray for me so that I will be able to set up a new beginning. This is for I am near to my last days.

97. (V. 192) The answer of the Great Oldman towards the same brother: Rejoice, brother, and have courage! Do not let the devil to trouble you through useless things. Does your love reckon that is somebody tempted and troubled without the

[217] The false resting which they have been living into, and which they have allowed themselves to be allured into, it actually is a slavery to pleasures and it will bring them to the supreme state of that slavery which will unveil the whole its power within them in the "eternal non-resting".

[218] Barsanuphius and John unite the suffering of the troubles with the giving of thanks for that to Go. Through the giving of thanks our patience will get even more strengthened, and our patience will be shown as being for God. This is for in such a case we give glory to God not only for the pleasant things but also for the unpleasant things, by seeing in the unpleasant things too the wisdom and the pedagogical love of God for us.

[219] It is here about Abba Serid, the abbot of the monastery.

permission from God? No. God allows these things to happen to us for the benefit of our soul. But the devil seeing that he has turned the things against us, as he did in the beginning, by getting us out of the holy peace of the Paradise. This is because what removed us from out things? Instead of the holy peace the devil threw within is the furious anger. Instead of that hatred from God which one hated the evil ones with, the devil threw within us the evil hatred which we hate with the good ones and even God Himself. But we do not understand and we do not know that, in order to cut off from us all the shameful memories and all the evil and soul-corruptive thoughts, God told us to pray even for our enemies and to bless them who curse us and He commanded us to love our enemies (Mt. 5: 44). And if we have been commanded to love our enemies, who haven't served us either lazily or zealously, what excuse will us have if we do not love them who have done good things to us and who have been serving us, even if the devils present our servants to us as serving us lazily? If you want to be saved and if you have entrusted your soul to God and to us, you won't believe your thought. This is because the devils sow as an evil seed the evil things instead of the good things. Stop yourself, therefore, from following to devils, and you will find the way to God. This is for God Himself told: "If you want and if you obey Me, you will eat the good things of the earth" (Isa. 1: 19). So, it depends on us to eat or not to eat (the good things). And why do we defame our neighbor? Do not search for strive invoking unimportant motifs, but be pleasant to him in everything. And do not think evil about somebody, lest yourself will become evil[220]. This is because the evil one thinks at evil things and the good one thinks at good things. And thinking about some people: "lo, they are speaking against me", it is a war characteristic to the beginners. From here comes the fact that, if two are praying in a monastic cell, or if they guide on one another, somebody could say contrary things about them. And if he thinks like that, he won't be by that into truth, and in his insanity one like this one will cause perdition to himself. You must not remain in these things. This is for the brother thinks that he can find out many things through you, even if you are a little troubled because of him in order you to gain your patience. Rejoice and be glad for

[220] By thinking evil about another, yourself have become evil, because that thought is yours and it will imprint you and it will make you full of venom.

great is the payment for the patience! (Mt. 5: 12). This is for, even before my letter you found out from brother John that we are not allowed in troubles without the will of God, and this is being done for our benefit. So, you must not believe the devils in anything against your brother. This is because the things are not such (as they whisper to you). But they are the ones wanting to disturb you. But the Lord makes them helpless.

And your thought which you are telling through: "I have decided to make myself servant to the people" it is not a thought of humbleness. Without any doubt, the Apostle praised on himself that he made himself everyone's servant. Do you want to say that too? But when will you reach this measure of humbleness? You do not know what you have said, brother.

Scholia: Look at the wisdom of the Oldman. Because he saw that one calling himself and reckoning himself as servant, as one who thought that he was important and that he did some feat, the Oldman laughed at him and proved him as unworthy of such a title, and he pushed him by all means towards humbleness in his deed. This is for the humbleness in word is the fruit of the pride and it is fickle and it gives birth to vain-glory as its mother.

98. (V. 193) The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother.

I wonder about some people who, after spending many years in schools, they still learn the alphabet and read on syllables when they should be by now consummate teachers. And I also wonder about them who after bearing the monastic schism for a long time and now they are supposed to discern among more subtle thoughts, they still are tested by the wars of the beginners. You should guide the deceived ones to the righteous path, as consummate guides. But you, instead of bearing the burdens of the helpless, you rather burden them through the annoyance you cause them all the way to sink them up. Take heed at yourself, brother. Won't be your soul harmed by the fact that you trouble the thought of your neighbor? This is because, after the brother have fulfilled your toil for God, you cause him the thought that he worked as he

wished. Is such a thing called by a consummate one of by a beginner? You must not talk to him like so, but you must advise him, and you must guide him, by fearing Him Who says: "Do not give your brother occasion for stumbling or for offense" (Rom. 14: 13). Why do you need to tell your brother a word that saddens him? But what am I telling you, for I am how I am? This is because my insanity hasn't allowed me to bear within me a word so that I said that to my brother and I troubled him. When the devil sows you evil thoughts within – because this is the devil's thing to sow some things instead of other things and he won't let the man to remember his death – why do you get disturbed for unimportant things, as you would be some beginners and untaught? Why do you forget the word: "deprived, needy, badly tormented"? (Hebr. 11: 37). Our Father chose the troubles for themselves but we are not ashamed of searching for any kind of resting. We must know, we the wicked, that all these things have been written in the books form above and we will be held accountable for those, in detail. I am writing you these things because I want to remove from you any rottenness[221]. And if I upset you, forgive me. This is for I will add nothing to bother you. Pray for me so that I can reach the knowledge of the life[222]. Regarding your death, I often told you and am I telling you now again: you won't tarry into body for a long time.

99. (V. 194) The question of the same brother addressed to the same Great Oldman: You know, Father, that I do not dare to oppose any of your commands in any aspects. This is for everything you say it is life to me. But pray for me, because my brother troubles me much.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Rejoice, my beloved son, rejoice into the Lord! I know and I am convinced into the Lord that if I said you to live for a year into a prison, you wouldn't resist that. For I know whom I am talking to: to a together-servant and of one soul with me. But, don't you know what Job

[221] The pleasures, the comfort, the hatred decompose our being as a rottenness, because we will become their helpless slaves. We will no longer be ourselves, and we will no longer be our own master upholding ourselves strongly.

[222] It is here about the knowledge of the true life, that is the life or the freedom from the slavery to passions.

says: "Isn't a temptation the house of the man on earth?" (Job 7: 1). Therefore, you must always be prepared for temptations and for troubles. And you must forger all the things from behind, as the Apostle says, and stretch yourself towards the things from ahead (Phil. 3: 13), so that you will not longer speak against your brother and you will no longer keep the evil in mind. The Lord will quickly crush satan under His feet (Rom. 16: 20). The grace of God and His peace and His love may be with you until the very end. Amen. And may the Lord give you joy, gladness, and the love that "never falls" (1 Cor. 13: 8), so that you will be able to endure on one another into the fear of God. This is for the death won't be late.

100. (V. 195) The question of the same brother towards the same Great Oldman: Tell me, Father, what the humbleness is? And pray for my road through death to be in peace.

The answer of Barsanuphius: The humbleness is to reckon on yourself as "dust and ashes" (Job 42: 6) in deeds and in words; and not only in words. Namely you to say: "Who am I?" (2 Kings[223] 7: 18). Who values me? I do not mean anything to anybody". Regarding the death, you must wait a little longer for the Lord and He will glorify your exit into much joy. Pray for me, my brother. I am embracing you into the Lord.

101. (V. 196) The question of the same brother towards the same Great Oldman: Abba, my brother opposes me immediately, and he doesn't show me any compassion. What do you command me to do?

The answer of Barsanuphius: I wonder about your simplicity. Do you simply think that the devil sits peacefully, without tempting anybody? We cannot blame them who have been topple over, in foams, by the devil. Also, we cannot blame either those who are pushed by the devil to oppose and to be uncompassionate. Here the passion is working. Take heed at the said things, with understanding. This is for you too are under the work of the devil. And you do not see your things

[223] In KJB we have: 2 Samuel.

while you sharply see the things of your neighbor. Lo, you have told the things of your brother, but you haven't said your things. There are only a few days since you asked about humbleness and you hear that it consists of reckoning yourself as "dust and ashes" and not to value yourself at all. But the dust and the ashes and the non-self-cherishing, do they expect the sympathy (the compassion) from somebody? Especially from the man who is mastered by the hater of the good? And this for you are move advances than he is in age and in priesthood? But he who is more advances owes to bear the more unimportant one, and to say: "I am unworthy". And if you say it but you actually do not endure it, you will say that vainly. And who are you for you have eyes which do not see the foreign passions? You are a man whom have been preached to goods above any measure[224]. If you thought at those, you would forget to eat you bread[225]. But you haven't tasted those yet, so that those haven't become to you desires as they should. Remember Lazarus, for how long he endures while thanking God, and you must also not forget about What I have been told you for many times that here is a devilish envy. You know what it is waiting for you. And I believe in God that that won't be successful in anything.

102. (V. 197) The same brother asks for the prayer of the Great Oldman" Pray for me, Father, for I have fallen into hallucinations.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother Andrew, let's shout out together with Saint Paul: "Oh, the deep of the richness and of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How unresearched are His judgments and how unknown are His ways!" (Rom. 11; 33). How does He stop us too from bragging ourselves without bow and form thinking that our sword will save us (Ps. 43:

[224] Have been prepared to you the immeasurable goods of the future life.

[225] He who is humble, he won't see another's passions, of his own unimportant worries, for he reckons on himself as the most unimportant among all, as nothing by himself. But in the same time, the humble one will see the overwhelming glory of God as no one else, and that's why he will no longer pay attention to the tiny soap bubbles of the human worries, he will no longer get alarmed by those. He will take care, at most, of the bearers of the worldly worries. On the other hand, when you see yourself as nothing, you have reached the supreme conscience of what you are, namely that conscience of the fact that you totally depend on God. The conscience and God are the two unseparated realities being revealed at maximum. But by that, you also open yourself totally to God, you see yourself as full of God.

4[226])? He does that with the grace of His kindness. This is for He says: "By grace we are saved" (Eph. 2: 5). He allows us to fall into hallucinations and into other passions in order us to know our helplessness and where we still are at. He allows that to happen to us for his kindness, so that our trust to be founded on God and not on us. But take heed at not reckoning that it is the will of God us to fall into hallucinations and into other passions, but God allows us to suffer those because of our carelessness; but, in His love for people God uses those evils for making to be born within us the humbleness in order us to be saved[227]. But how? Will we attribute out salvation to our passions? Not at all. But we will attribute our salvation to His non-narrowed wisdom in His skillfulness of using all sorts of means. Think at what He wakes our mind up like, in all ways, so that our mind to say: "If the Lord didn't help me, my soul would immediately dwell in hell" (Ps. 93: 17[228]).

So, by knowing that because of our helplessness and because of our carelessness we suffer these, let's do everything that depends on us not to fall into them. But it depends on His mercy to deliver us from them. He did this to Peter and to Paul, by withdrawing, a little, His power from them in order they to see that are human. And the first one fell into denial (Mt. 26: 69-75). The another was lowered in a basket (2 Cor. 11: 33). This was for both of them to know and not to trust on themselves, but they to trust the Master of all.

Therefore, you too must learn who you are and where you are[229]. And be forgetful to them who are together-servants with you and you condemn on yourself. You must truly humble yourself not only in front of God but also in front of the

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[226] In KJB we have: Ps. 44: 3: "For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them:"; in ROB we have: Ps. 43: 4: "Because not with their sword they inherited the land and their arm didn't save them," (E. l. t.'s n.)

[227] Not out of the will of God occur the evil passions within us. But God allows them to occur by respecting our freedom as wrongly understood by us, or, better said, a weaken will because of our carelessness. But God uses those too in order to make us reach the humbleness, by realizing us what slavery we have fallen into through passions, or by our will to live by ourselves, and He makes us to desire our elevation towards Him.

[228] In KJB we have: Ps. 94: 17: "Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence."; in ROB we have: Ps. 93: 17: "Because, if the Lord didn't help me, my soul would almost dwell into hell." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[229] You must learn to know what spiritual level are you on, in order you to know your "power" or helplessness.

people[230]. And "throw all your worries upon Him" (Ps. 54: 23[231]; 1 Pt. 5: 7), "Who can abundantly do much more than we ask for or we think" (Eph. 3: 20). And He will accomplish all the promised things. This is for He won't reject them who beg Him with the whole their heart: His own and honest servants; they who have been freed through Him and in Him, from their former man, and who have heard with untold joy: "Everything you will tie on earth will be tied in heavens too" and so on (Mt. 18: 18); they whom he has given all the power on heavens and on earth[232]. "Serve your Lord with fear and gladden yourself of Him with tremble" (Ps. 2: 11). And thank Him with an unstoppable mouth for He has had mercy on you, so that you are among His servants. Him to be the glory forever. Amen.

103. (V. 198) The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother, who asked the Great Oldman to pray for him.

The merciful God, The One all-high and merciful, may give you the power from above in order you to be able to always think at the words written to you and you to fulfill the truly spiritual thing, namely you to always be together with those who have received the talents and they doubled those talents (Mt. 25: 16-17) and you to hear the things they heard; and in order you to endure on one another, so that your land to bring forth good fruits to God and at the right time, and those fruits to be either hundredfold, or sixtyfold, or thirtyfold (Mk. 4: 8).

[230] He who doesn't humble on himself in front of the people as well, he will preserve his pride in his being, and he will always ger in front of the people. He will believe that God has made him better, and he will justify that by invoking something from within himself, or he will think that has made himself better than others. This is no longer a sentiment of brotherhood. And if everyone does so, there will be maintained a struggle among people. Of course, other is the humbleness before God and another is the humbleness before people. You recon God as everything, while you reckon your brothers a better than you are due to their bigger efforts for fulfilling the will of God.

[231] In KJB we have: Ps. 55: 22: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."; in ROB we have: Ps. 54: 25: "Throw your worry towards the Lord and He will feed you; He won't ever give wobbling to the righteous." (E. l. t.'s n).

[232] He has given them all the power for tying or for untying for they are united with God in prayer and through their love for people. They know that they do not tie or untie out of their own power, but in the name of God and out of God's power. But they do everything to being the people closer to God, by showing God to the people, through their own faith and love.

This is my prayer, for you by guarding these things to be seen by me in the Kingdom of God as good friends gladdening yourself into the Lord.

104. (V. 199) The question of the same brother towards the same Great Oldman: Tell me, Father, where has come to us from, that temptation that has come upon us? And what is that coming to us for? And how could it be emptied of its power? And pray for me so I will be delivered from it.

The answer of Barsanuphius: The devil who hates the good, by knowing that is useful to our soul and that there it is no other ways for gaining the salvation except by bearing us the burdens to one another (Gal. 6: 2), he envies us and he struggles to sow within us his things. From here arises the temptation, which will be emptied of its power by the Lord. And the temptation will be emptied of its power by the fact that we bear the burdens to one another and by praying us for the man whom the temptation comes to us through[233]. But without fighting the reasoning (places in the service of the temptation) the end of the temptation won't come[234]. This is because the sowing is facilitated by ceding[235]. And this one too is a temptation because of the devil's envy, uphold by an apparent justification, in order to pluck you off from the love of the saints who pray for you and in order to deprive you of their help. Lo, I have shown you both the origin and the end of the temptation.

[233] We pray also for him whom our temptation come to us through, for he is weak and that's why he accepted to be the tool of the devil. Our prayer will strengthen him, for he will feel through us the love God has for him. This is for the love of God shown through us it makes us behave with love to him, to speak well about him to others, and he will find out about that.

[234] Answering evil to evil, searching for satisfying the need for pleasure, it gives us the impression that it strengthens our being. On this is founded the allegedly rational argumentation of the temptation. We must expose the falsehood of this argumentation by showing that we strengthen too much our body, and that we strengthen for a while that that is perishing, while we actually weaken our immortal soul and our freedom as subject. Everywhere, Barsanuphius and John saw the man's salvation by strengthening that what is imperishable in man's being. The good one is strong. Committing the good is a strengthening of the existence. The full ontological implies the ethical. Christ strengthens the man on the cross and by communicating His strength to us in order us to endure the hardships, the temptations Christ makes us being strong too, for He makes it kind.

[235] The temptation is a seed of the evil received by man by ceding, by the fact that the man doesn't fight that seed, in order that see not to be sown within him; the man receives the temptation by an act of weakness. That is a ceding to the false argumentation.

You must endure for a little while, and you will take the relief from those into Christ Jesus, our Lord.

105. (V. 200) The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother who got discouraged because of the temptations which were surrounding him.

Brother Andrew, the one of-one-soul with me, do not allow yourself to be discouraged. This is for God hasn't forsaken you, neither He will. But the announcement made by the Master to Adam, our common parent, it won't pass. And that is: "Into the sweat of your face you will eat your bread" (Gen. 3: 19). And as He commanded the external man, he also commanded the inward man to collaborate through ascesis, with the prayers of the saints which help the man much, in order the man not to remain fruitless. This is for, as the gold burnt into oven while being held with the tongues and stricken with the hammer, it will become good and appropriate for the imperial diadem, likewise the man upheld by the prayers of the saints[236] which can do and fulfill many things, when burnt by troubles and beaten by temptations, if the man endures and he gives thanks, he will become son of the emperor[237]. Therefore, everything is useful to you, in order you too to receive that daring from the saints and due to your efforts, whose firstfruits don't be ashamed to show[238]. So, do not cause to yourself sadness instead of spiritual joy. And trust Him Who promised that top you. Be strong, my beloved one, into the Lord!

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[236]

[237] Such a man reaches to be master upon himself, and free, and together-emperor with God over all things, and insubordinate to any inferior force, but son of the Emperor and brother of the Only Begotten Son.

[238] Do not be ashamed of showing that you have gained the firstfruits of your daring against passions, against temptations, and that you have gained the full freedom from them, and you are no longer mastered by them. It is not a shame to show that you are no longer mastered by anything, that yourself are master over all things. Master of himself is him who is no longer mastered by anything. Though, you must not brag about having self-mastery, you must show that daring against passions in your deeds. You are not ashamed of showing with your deed that you are stronger than the temptations are, in order to resist them, in order not to allow yourself to be enslaved by them. And this daring gives a joy too, as it will be shown further on.

106. (V. 201) The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother who fell into a great discouragement.

May the loving-of-people God not allow the hater-enemy to sow sadness or discouragement within you, in order him not to bring you to despair regarding the things promised to you, my beloved one, by the blessed God and by the Holy Ghost. And may God open in order you to understand the Scriptures, as He yore open the hearts of Cleophas and of his companion (Lk. 24: 32). Why God, after the promises He made to Abrahan, He tempted Abraham again? This is for it was written that after these words – I mean the words of the promises – God allowed His friend who brought Him such a great sacrifice and who was not due to suffer anything, and whom his faith was reckon as righteous, to fall again into temptation (Gen. 22: 1; 15: 6) in order to text him and in order to leave defenseless the powers of the darkness. And this is in order to be an example to the believers who, "through many troubles will enter the Kingdom of God" (Lk. 21: 19), "thanking for everything" (1 Thes. 5: 18).

Take together with these one, within your mind, also that Job among the saints. This is for "this sincere friend of God, on the righteous and without blemish and pious and estranged from all evil things", who was not due to suffer any evil, God surrendered him to be tempted in order to be proven, until He showed his enemies and accusers ashamed and defenseless, because of being exposed by him.

Take in the spirit of the faith Christ as well, the Chieftain and the Consummator or our salvation (Hebr. 2: 10), Him Who has redeemed us form the curse which we fell in (Gen. 3: 13). Look at how he reached the time of the cross and He showed us the way of the patience as being the way of the salvation[239], by saying: "Father, if possible, let his cup pass away from me, but not as I want but as You want" (Mt. 26: 39). And He did that for us, Him Who rebuked Peter who told Him: "Be merciful to You, Lord, and not allow that to happen to You" (Mt. 16: 22), for He was ready to suffer. He prayed for us to pass that cup away, in order us too while praying not to get discouraged, despite for

[239] The way of the salvation it is the way of the patience, as means of the true strengthening of the man towards anything that enslaves him because of his weakness.

the present our prayer isn't listened to[240]. Therefore, let's think at the sufferings of our Savior made man and let's endure together with Him the condemnations, the nails, the disregard, the despise, the spitting over, the mockery coat, the adornment of the thorns crown, the vinegar with its sourness, the stabbing with the spear, the water and the blood; and take out of all of these the relief of your pains. This is for He won't allow your toils to be in vain (1 Cor. 15: 18). But in order you to remain non-partaker to those - while you are looking at the saints who bore at their time the fruits of their troubles and they were praised for that – he allowed you too to endure a little tiredness, in order you too to become together-partaker with them and with Jesus, by gaining daring in front of Him, together with the saints. Therefore, do not get sad, for God hasn't forgotten you, but He takes care of you as of a true son of His, and not as of an illegitimate son. And you will remain steadfast if you steadfastly take heed at yourself, so that you won't fell off the fear of God and of giving thanks to God. But you will be happy if you make yourself truly stranger and poor. This is for these ones are the inheritors of the Kingdom of God[241]. Encourage yourself and be strong into the Lord. I do not hesitate to remind you about the same goods which the Lord will bestow to you. Pray for me.

107. (V. 202) The prayer of the same brother addressed to the same Great Oldman asking for support for his heart and for the forgiveness of his sins since his birth.

[240] Jesus didn't pray for Himself that cup to pass ways from Him, but He prayed in order to teach us hos to pray when we are in a great suffering, and He prayed also for us to have strength to endure. Thus, neither Him received nor we are receiving by praying the removal of the suffering, of the trouble, but we receive the power for enduring that. This is for that is useful to us in order us to reach the strength of the mastery upon all things which try to enslave us, and not for getting us rid of pain. Neither Christ obtained what he asked for, nor we will obtain. But we obtain something else and more useful. Our prayer is not always listened to in what we ask for, but it is always listened to in the fact that we are given power to endure what it is allowed us to duffer.

[241] He who is intentionally and willingly stranger to and poor of everything, he will be truly strong, for he has elevated himself above all things and he can live without those things. He has discovered his endless subject that is more valuable than everything, and he is truly free and powerful when united with the Almighty Father and Supreme Subject Who is submitted to nothing. He is son by grace of the Supreme Emperor.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Mya our Lord Jesus Christ to be healing and support to your soul and body and Him to uphold your heart so that the devil won't take you under his mastery, as he hates the good and the people. Regarding the forgiveness of your sins since your birth and until now, this will be destined to you after forty days if you will be partaker to my prayers for that gift, through your short patience. Therefore, encourage yourself and be strong into the Lord. May the Lord, the Great Doctor of the souls and of the bodies, be with you. Peace to you into the Lord, brother!

108. (V. 203) The answer of John – the other Oldman – towards the same brother.

If the people think that is happy him who is rich in the worldly things, all the more I bless your love for you have enriched yourself in the godlike things, through the prayers of our blessed Father. Without any doubt, if his prayer didn't take it in advance and said you: "strengthen yourself and encourage yourself and be strong", you would be in danger to get sick because of your small carelessness and because of your little courage for persevering in patience and in long-enduring towards your thoughts and towards them who take care of you. But so you remembered the Apostle who says: "Bear your burdens to one another and so you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Eph. 6: 2). This is for God loves you and therefore He tested you mercifully, because of the prayer of His servant. Or, through this small test you too to collaborate with his prayer. And this has been counted as your work, in order to be shut up the enemy's mouth from saying: "If he was tempted towards correction, he would collapse"[242]. Therefore, you must not get sad. This is for it happens to you as you heard it from the Great Oldman. Encourage yourself, and be strong, according to his word.

[242] You have been collaborating with the prayers of Barsanuphius by enduring the temptation brought upon you. His prayer didn't spare you from being tempted, in order you too to be able to show a together-working with his prayer. But also, his prayer helped you to manifest that patience. By that the enemy's mouth has been shut up, because otherwise the enemy could say that if you were submitted to such a test you would wobble in your steadfastness in faith and in patience.

109. (V. 204) The same Oldman escaped the temptations by the prayer of the Saint Oldman and through his spiritual teaching, so that he sent him thanks.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Raise all the doxology to the God of the glory. Let's praise Him forever. Amen. This is for not to us is due the glory, but only to Him and to His Son and to the Holy Ghost. God brought your love to our helplessness in order us to receive His kelp through one another[243]. God wanted to fulfill with us what the Scripture says: "The brother helped by his brother is like a fortified and surrounded by walls stronghold" (Prov. 18: 19).

But may all of us be helped by our Big Brother, I mean Jesus. This is for he deigned to make all of us His brothers[244].

[243] God could give His help also to the isolated man. But God makes His work clear when He give His help to each one through another: God ties each man not only to Himself but also to another man. By that, God impose to each man a responsibility for another and God upholds the love among them. Thus, God shuns each man from the pride of reckoning that he doesn't need but God's help, so that he could despise other people. How much is my heart being warmed up by the interest of another in me! The another is capable too to strengthen me us, as I am capable to help him as well. The man is not annulled. But the reciprocal love aminating them it makes them capable of being elevated to the feeling of God. But not only this nobleness produced by love within them, it elevated them to the feeling of God, but they are elevated to that also by experiencing the limit of their power to help themselves without the help coming to both him and his neighbor, from above, from God Who is the source of the power.

[244] The Son of God, by making Himself our Big Brother, he confirmed the will of God for each of us to be helped through another man, through a brother of ours into humanity. He showed by that the great importance of my brother for my existence and my importance as brother in other's existence. And by that He showed our responsibility for one another, as brothers. When God did that to us, He laid down a foundation for making His Son as our Brother, or our creation as beings having their foundation in the will of God to make always His Son as our Brother, Whom us to be saved through, or to assure to us the eternal life. Jesus has placed within Himself, as Brother of ours, all the possibilities of power communication from brother to brother, and the endless resources of mercy. Jesus lives in a culminant manner His responsibility as Brother for His brothers, or the value had by His human brothers, the emotional content given to the own life my interest in my brother and the interest of my brother in me, the warmth and the meaning given to the human life by the relation between brother and brother. And in Jesus the unlimited responsibility for our brother is not intertwined with the pain for not being I able to provide my brother with the eternal life, as I want but as I am not able to give it, or actually to ensure the eternal value of my brother as felt by me. This is for in Jesus this brother responsibility can accomplish to the brothers that what He wants: making His brothers eternal. Descending from heavens in order to become our Brother, the Son of God descended His supreme nobleness that can ennoble the people thought their real reciprocal love.

And so, the angels reckon us happy. We have such a powerful Brother, in order Him to make us powerful too; strong, in order Him to share with us the spoils take from the enemy; chief-strategist (supreme armies leader), in order to crush in war the enemies who wage war against us; Doctor, in order Him to reconcile our outside man with our inward man who obeys him; nourishing, for He nourishes us with spiritual food; alive, in order Him to make us alive; merciful, in order Him to have mercy on us; lenient, in order Him to be lenient to us; Emperor, in order Him to make us emperors; God, in order Him to make us gods. Therefore, by knowing that all thigs are in Him, you pray to Him. This is for He know what you need before you ask Him for those (Mt. 6: 8). And he will fulfill the asks of your heart (Ps. 36: 4[245]), if you don't impede Him from that. Therefore, you raise your doxology to Him. For His is due the glory forever. Amen. Pray for me, brother, in order I to know my helplessness and I to humble myself.

110. (V. 205) The question of the same brother towards the same Great Oldman about drought and about his long silence.

The answer of Barsanuphius: God does all the things at their due time. And God does all the things in the benefit of the people. If God impeded the rai, He would do that towards the corrective rebuking of the people. But God will again have mercy on people and He will send them rain. Likewise, the word was stopped for a while, in order some of the people to feel, despite they still did not feel. But God comes back again and the word will be uttered again according to need towards benefit.

111. (V. 206) The supplication of the same brother towards the same Great Oldman: I beg you Father, fulfill for me your promises about the forgiving the sins.

[245] In KJB we have: Ps. 37: 4: "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."; in ROB we have: Ps. 36: 4: "Delight yourself into the Lord and He will fulfill the asks of your heart." (E. l. t.'s n.)

The answer of Barsanuphius: “Blessed is God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ Who has blessed us with the whole spiritual blessing into the heavenly ones” (Eph. 1: 3). This is for if you are preparing yourself for receiving the things which you have asked from me, you will take those by your much striving and by our helplessness. This is for I reckon as mine the gains and the benefits of every man and of every soul[246]. That’s why joyfully and burning I am spending myself for you souls, as God knows well, He Who is the only knower of our souls. And I know and I am confident that we won’t lose our toils in vain. Therefore, trust the fact that your will take the promised things. But by taking those, you must guard them, for the grace to remain with you. This is because many took, but after they took, they fell because of not guarding fearfully that what they took. Therefore, you must desire the good things but you also must preserve them; you must humble disciple of Him Who humbled Himself for you; you must be well-pleasant servant of your Master, and obedient to The Obedient One[247]; you just be non-keeping the evil in mind out of the power of Him Who do not keep the evil in minds you must be long-patient out of the power of Him Who is long-patient; you must be merciful out of the power of Him Who is merciful; you must be bearing the burdens of your neighbor out of the power of Him Who bears your burdens; you must be loving everybody sincerely as He loves us too; you must be following Him in all things until He will receive you in His great resting, which “the eye hasn’t seen it and the ear hasn’t heard it and at the heart of the man it hasn’t ascended, to the things prepared by God to all

[246] If I reckon as mine all the things received by somebody from God, I will also I pray for him to receive those things from God, by reckoning that I will receive those things myself. One cannot feel rich while knowing that others are poor. Only in the ambience of the general richness I am rich too. I am getting rich by receiving form others and I enjoy seeing the things had by others. I will enjoy what I have if I see that what I have is beneficial to others, fructifying in others, bringing joy to others. This refers especially to the spiritual goods.

[247] Thus, it is reconciled the fact of not having anything that enslaves you and of having God as your Master and as a Father and as a Brother, with the fact that you still obey God and you are full of humbleness. You obey Christ, but also Christ not only obeys His Father but He also listens to your needs; you humble yourself towards Him, but also Him humbled Himself and He still humbles Himself for you and towards you, more than you humble yourself, for He descends from His infinite godhead, or with His infinite godhead, all the way down to the state of being your Brother. It is a contest in humbleness and in reciprocal valuation, a contest taking place in full freedom.

of them who love Him" (1 Cor. 2: 9). Him it is due the glory forever. Amen. Pray for me, you monk!

112. (V. 207) The same brother asked the Great Oldman for the same things.

Answer: Brother Andrew, may God give you the things said by Jesus: "Ask and you will take" (Jn. 16: 24). May Him fulfill all your asks. But you must prepare your house into the whole cleanness in order you to receive the bestowed things. This is for they must be placed in a clean house as in a treasury. And they spread their good fragrance there where is no garbage. But him who taste them he will estrange himself from the former man, by crucifying himself to the world and by crucifying the world to him (Gal. 7: 14) and by always living to the Lord. This ship won't be wrecked regardless how hard is stricken by the enemy's waves. This ship has become fearsome to the enemies because they see in it the holy seal. And as enemy this ship is to those, as friend it is to the great Emperor. Therefore, you must clean yourself, brother, consummately, in order you to love consummately. You must totally get far, in order you to be able to consummately come closer[248]. You must disgust yourself about an adoption, in order you to take another adoption[249]. You must stop to fulfill the wills (yours or of the evil one) in order you to be able to fulfill the will[250]. You must cut off

[248] Only him who consummately hates the evil, only him love the good consummately. But consummately hating the evil means the total absence of the hatred. You won't be able to come consummately close to somebody in love, if you haven't firstly got consummately far from your egotism that separates you from your neighbor, if you haven't firstly removed the gate that locks you into yourself. Among the evil ones, among the devils, there is no real closeness, because of not being love among them, and also because they haven't found themselves either. They are unwillingly tied to one another, by the curse of the evil and of the hatred.

[249] While you are the son of the devil, you won't be able to become the son of God. As long as you are tied to somebody who is evil, and who urges you to evilness and to egotism, you won't be able to become intimate to a kind person, or to communicate to a kind person. This is because there is also a connection among those who are enslaved to evil. It is the connection of the slavery, a connection they do not want. Each evil person is tied in the own ling in chain tying all the evil ones together. They loathe on one another, but they cannot detach from one another either.

[250] Your wills separated from the will of God are not fully free wills. They are not your true will. This is for such a will is enslaved by pride, or bur some other passion. Such a will is multiple because of your self being torn apart by obeying now a master then another master.

yourself and you must tie up yourself[251]. You must kill yourself and so to make yourself alive[252]. You must forgive yourself in order you to know yourself[253]. And, lo, you have the deeds of the monk.

113. (V. 208) The same brother asked the same Great Oldman the same things.

Answer: Brother and all-beloved soul of mine, Andrew! If you knew as you should the gift from God, even if all the hairs of your head had been equally numerous mouths, you still couldn't have worthily extolled or thank God. But I think that you realize this. God know that there is no blink of my eye or instance, when I do not have you in my mind and in my prayer. But if I love you so, all the more God loves you for He created you. And I pray Him to guide you and to govern you according to His will. And God governs you in your benefit. And if God has long-patience with you, this will be towards the increased benefit of your soul. Therefore, you must remain as you are, while thanking God for all the things and reckoning yourself as nothing in everything, and believing that all the things said to you will be fulfilled into Christ Jesus our Lord. Whom it is due the glory forever. Amen.

114. (V. 209) The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother who asked him for the same things and for understanding from God.

You cannot have any consistency. Your free will is affirmed when affirming the will of God. Then you will be truly free and unitary, or yourself, for you will permanently do that what corresponds to your subject as eternal foundation of your happy existence in your subject's ultimate foundation.

[251] Cut yourself off from the evil one and tie yourself up to God, for through both of those you will liberate yourself.

[252] You must kill yourself in order you to truly be in communion with God and with the people. You must kill the egotistic individual who is keeping you dead, in order you to become alive as subject of the communion.

[253] You must forget about caring for yourself in order you to truly know yourself, by being your conscience waked up by your responsible self, enriched and deepened through the fundamental ties with God and with your fellow humans, ties which your self discovers.

Brother Andrew, our Lord said to Martha: "If you believe, you will see the glory of God" (Jn. 11: 40). Therefore, you must believe at your turn, and you will see Lazarus resurrected from dead and sitting at the table together with Jesus (Jn. 12: 2). And you will see Mary sitting down at His feet, and as delivered of the Martha's worries. You must believe that all the things which have been asked for, through me the unworthy, from God, they will be given to your love. God asks for nothing form you except for patience and for thankfulness, in order Him to open for you the treasuries of the wisdom and of the understanding from within Himself. I am embracing you into the Lord, into Whom I wish you to be healthy both with your soul and with your body, and pray for me.

115. (V. 210) The answer of the same Great Olsman addressed to the same brother.

Brother and beloved Andrew, listen to me! They who receive from the emperor the precious coins, if they guard those zealously and carefully, those coins will remain shiny and clean. But if they are careless, those coins not only will rust, but they will even be lost. Therefore, a certain wiseman dais: "Tie up your silver" (Sirach[254] 28: 29). And I am telling you not only you to tie up your silver with doubtless faith, but you also to seal it up with your humbleness and with the long-patience of the obedience, which everyone who endure will be saved by (Mt. 10: 22). I am telling you, by the lenience of God, a daring thing: Through me, the all-unimportant one, the Great Mediator Jesus Who is the Son of the blessed Father and Who if the bestower of the Holy Ghost, He is telling you: "Forgiven are your many sins" (Lk. 7: 47-48), since your birth and until now. Therefore, by receiving this great and untold joy, love Him with the whole your power, by showing a fruit worthy of repentance (Mt. 3: 8) and by shouting out together with Saint Paul those words as a song: "Who will separate us from the love of Christ? The trouble, or the tribulation, or the hunger, or the persecution, or the lack of clothing, or the danger, or the fear, or the sword?";

[254] This book, called: *The Book of the Wisdom of Joshua the Son or Sirach (the Ecclesiastes)* it is not given in KJB, but it is given in ROB. The interested reader can find all the fourteen missing books on www.academia.edu, under the name *Bible Missing Texts*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

and by saying together with Him: "We are killed daily, we are reckoned as some sheep towards being slaughtered. But in all of these we are more than victorious through Him Who loved us. This is for I am entrusted that neither the death, nor the life, neither the angels, nor the principalities, neither the masteries, not the present things, neither the future things, neither the powers, nor the height, neither the darkness, nor any other creation will be able to separate us from the love of God into Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8: 35-39). You must show yourself as thinking at these not with your mouth but with your deeds. This is for he says: "Into your patience you will gain your souls" (Lk. 21: 19). You have become partaker to a great worthiness, and you must therefore show great and worthy deeds of patience and of worthiness. This is for through those it is waited for the consummation of which may us be found worthy in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. You must mill down these ceaselessly and by working them. And taste their sweetness in order they to give a good fragrance to your soul and the souls of those whom you meet with. Encourage yourself and be strong, you the all-well-believer!

116. (V. 211) The answer of the same Great Olsman addressed to the same brother.

Brother Andrew, our Lord told us that Elijah has already come (Mt. 17: 12). And I am telling you that your spiritual Lazarus has already resurrected and he has already been untied of his ties (Jn. 11: 44), and for him it has been fulfilled the word: "You have broken off my ties" (Ps. 115: 7[255]). Therefore, you to owe to bring "the sacrifice of praise" Him Who has untied you, in order you not to fall again, because of your carelessness, in the previous ties[256], according to the word of our Savior: "Behold, you have been made whole, from now on

[255] In KJB we have: Ps. 116: 16: "O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds."; in ROB we have: Ps. 115: 7: "Oh, Lord, I am Your servant and the son of Your handmaid; you have broken off my ties." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[256] By bringing the sacrifice of praise to God, you will exist the slavery of your egotism and of your passions. By surrendering yourself, with feeling of praising, to God, you will have liberated yourself and you will have entered the wide horizon of the life into the all-loving God.

do not sin" (Jn. 5: 14). Give thanks to God, this is for God will take care of you, and God will guide you in everything, if you persevere in willing. Be healthy with your soul and with your body. And pray for me.

117. (V. 212) The same brother, by receiving such a great gift, he asked for being shown (to God) him and the ones who were living together with him.

Answer: You the servant of the All-High God, and you together servant with me, Andrew. Peace to you and to the other together-servants with us, from God the Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ. I am making known to you that before your ask I showed you to the Holy and worshipped and of-one-being and of without-beginning Trinity, in a showing which to guard you against all evil. But I am not wanting you not to know also that there is also another showing, more fearful, more unavoidable, and more desirable into the whole fear and much loved, and more honorable and more glorious. Listen to which is that showing: When will be shamed up the hater-of-good enemy, by hearing that happy and of-life-maker voice of our Savior towards us, a full of joy and of gladness voice, a voice lightened by an untold shininess, saying to us: "Come, you the blessed one of My Father and inherit that Kingdom prepared to you since the foundation of the world" (Mt. 25: 34). Then will take place the great showing in front of Him, when "Will be given the Kingdom of God and the Father" (1 Cor. 15: 24). This is the one and beside this there is no other. And what that will be done like, listen to this: Each of the saints by presenting to God his saved sons, he will say with shining voice, with much and great daring, towards the bewilderment of the angels and of all heavenly powers: "Behold I and my children given to me by God" (Hebr. 2: 13; Isa. 8: 18)[257]. And not only on them, but he

[257] They who are saved through somebody, they are his spiritual sons. They have been saved through him for Christ Whom he made known to them, He worked through him upon them. But he also made himself an organ capable of the will of God: by his strong faith, by his life according to the will of Christ, by righteously guiding them. They will be his recommendation letter on the doom's day. They who show hos we have been fulfilling his responsibility for them. In himself they will be shown too, or what he has done for them (2 Cor. 3: 2). Among those who work for others, and they whom they work for, there will be produced a reciprocal

will surrender himself too, to God[258]. And then God will be everything in everybody (1 Cor. 15: 28). Pray for us to reach there. Blessed is him who wats for that and who will reach there. Pray for be, my beloved ones.

118. (V. 213) The same brother, by being bothered by hallucinations and by the temptations coming to him from the devils, and by wondering that after such a great love for people of God and after being him promised the future goods, the hallucinations and the temptations still occur to him, he asked the same Great Oldman about those: and if there still stay within him the seals of the promises[259].

The answer of Barsanuphius: "Much peace have they who love the Lord and there won't be offense to them" (Ps. 118: 165[260]). Much peace you too will have into God, all-honored brother Andrew, for you are of-same-thought with me. Let yourself not be drowsy because of the multitude of the devilish passions and hallucinations, but you must believe that their disturbances and temptations won't succeed in anything, if we carefully take heed to persevere in patience. This is for it has been written about the righteous who is saved by his faith: "If he dodges, My soul won't deign in him" (Hab. 2: 4). Let's therefore do not loose up the cord, in order us not to lose the things given to us by the loving-of-people and merciful God. This is for it is His own to give us too us to be guarded.

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interiority. They will no longer be separate from one another. The parents' heart can no longer be empties of their children, neither the children's heart can be emptied of their parents.

[258] But they who will surrender themselves to God, together with them whom they have brought to salvation, they too will be surrendered to the Father by Christ Who has been working through their zeal in order to gain others. They will be surrendered for Christ Himself, by surrendering Himself to God-the Father, Christ will have all of them inscribed within Himself. Christ will surrender all the things to the Father by having all the things surrendered to Him gathered within Himself. There will be a great concentration of all thing within Christ, in our Great Brother and, together with Him into the Father, for everyone to be into Christ in the Father's bosom.

[259] The promises are imprinted like a downpayment within those who believe in them. He who will be full of love in the Kingdom of God, he has the love developing in himself, since now.

[260] In KJB we have: Ps. 119: 165: "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them."; in ROB we have: Ps. 118: 165: "Much peace have they who keep Your law and they won't be offended." (E. l. t.'s n.)

And do not wonder that after the holy promises and after the gifts which God doesn't feel sorry for, there will move again towards you the dishonest passions of those ones, which aim again to steal the endless treasure, but you rather just remember about their shamelessness from after the testimony of our Master God, on him from among saints the glorious Job[261]. Remember how many temptations and plots he set in movement to tear down that tower, but he was unsuccessful in stealing the treasure of Job's illustrious faith and thanksgiving. This is for, as the meeting with the fire will make the gold shinier, the multitude of the trials makes the righteous likewise. This is for God allowed that even after His testimony about the righteous Job, His servant Job to be tested towards an even greater praise and glory of the Master[262] towards the shaming up of the enemies. You must therefore not allow yourself to become discouraged. This is for the seals of the promises stand steadfast. But you must patiently wait for the Lord. This is for "he who endures to the end, that one will be saved" (Mt. 10: 22), into Christ Jesus our Lord Who to be the glory forever. Amen.

119. (V. 214) The answer of the Great Oldman towards the same brother, whom was sown into the thought that his unrestraint to eating will impede him to reach the things promised to him.

I am not telling you to fulfill the need of your body as due, because I would disregard the restraint and the ascesis. God forbid that! But I am telling you that because, fi the inward work doesn't help the man according to God, the man's external word will be useless. That's why our Lord said: "not that what enters the man defiled the man, but the things coming out of man's mouth" (Mt. 15: 18). Actually, the inward work that is done with the pain of the heart, it will bring the true peace of the heart, and this peace will bring the humbleness; and the

[261] Despite God Himself testified on the faithfulness of Job, the devils had the shamelessness to doubt the guarantee given them by God about Job's faithfulness.

[262] God received a greater glory by the fact that Job endured the trials which came upon him, both because thus the testimony of God was proven as true and also because it was shown how strong are they who believe in God.

humbleness make the man dwelling place of God[263]. And God's dwelling will cast the evil devils and their chieftain out, together with their dishonorable passions. And thus, the man will become sanctified church, illuminated and clean and belonging to God, and full of all good-fragrance and of kindness and of gladness. Then that man become bearer of God, or better said that man becomes a god, as it was said: "I said: you are gods and sons of the All-High" (Ps. 81: 6[264]).

Let's yourself, therefore, not to be troubled by that thought, or better said by the cunning one, that the bodily foods will impede you from reaching the promise. This is for these foods are holy[265] and out of what is good there cannot come something evil. But the things coming out through your mouth as being sent by your heart, those ones stop and impede the man to surely reach the promises placed in front of him. Therefore, by fulfilling the need of the body, make no differences, but make the power of the inward man to get tired and to humble the inward man's thoughts. And then God will open the eyes of your heart so that to see[266] "the true light" (Jn. 1: 9) and to say with understanding "I am saved by grace" (Eph. 2: 5) into Christ Jesus our Lord Who is due the glory forever. Amen.

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[263] The humbleness totally opens the man to God. This is for the humble man no longer care about anything belonging to him, but he will aspect everything from God. But the humbleness is brought within heart by the appeasement that means the man not worrying about anything, by detaching himself from all things. Through appeasement one can reach the humbleness, to the true conscience that you are not and you have nothing by your own. The humbleness will make you reckon yourself as totally depending on God, and it makes God fully obvious to you.

[264] In KJB we have: Ps. 82: 6: "I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the Highest."; in ROB we have: Ps. 81: 6: "I said: "Gods you are and all sons of the All-High." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[265] If the body is through humbleness a sanctified temple of God, and if you do not tie yourself by pl4easure on the foods you consume, but your whole thought is at God, those foods will be sanctified at their turn, by the fact that while you eat you think at God.

[266] Receiving into the body the foods while thinking that God is everything and I have nothing by myself, it will open my eyes I to see God through this need for food too, and I to see even all foods as created by God in order to correspond to the need of supporting my body and my life on earth. This is the illumination which we see God in creation through, or which we see God through as Creator of all realities. If I am nothing by myself, then there must be Somebody to give me and to everyone our existence, together with their purpose for me.

120. (V. 215) The question of the same brother towards the same Great Oldman: Because, as you know, Master, I am weak both with my soul and with my body, I beg you to pray God to give me power for patience so that I to be able to bear the things coming upon me.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother Andrew, I want your love to find out that all the gifts (the charismas) are given by the coming of the Holy Ghost, for many times and in many ways. Once God gave the Ghost to the Apostles, in order they to be able to cast out devils; on another occasion they to do healings; on another occasion they to foresee; and on another occasion they to resurrect dead people. But the consummate Ghost consists of forgiving the sins and in liberating the souls form darkness and in bringing the souls to light. So, I pray God to give the Holy Ghost to you towards having patience and thankfulness; and for "your enemy to be shamed up by not having anything bad to say about us" (Tit. 2: 8). You too must collaborate a little, by fighting to gain the Holy Ghost and "God Who is rich in mercy" will give the Holy Ghost to you" (Eph. 2: 4). Pray for me, brother.

121. (V. 216) Question of the same brother addressed to the same Great Oldman: I beg you, master, always remember me and show me how I must live with the brother who dwells near me.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, it is written: "If I forget you Jerusalem, let my right hand be forgotten" (Ps. 136: 5[267]). This is about remembrance. As about how you must live with one who lives near you, he who wants to be pleasant to God let him cut off his will for the sake of his close one, and by forcing himself. This is for He said: "My Kingdom belongs to them who take it by force, and they who take it by force they kidnap it" (Mt. 11: 12). Therefore, you find out what your brother is rested by, and do that, and you will find resting from

[267] In KJB we have: Ps. 137: 5: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning."; in ROB we have: Ps. 136: 5: "If I forget you, Jerusalem, let my right hand be forgotten!" (E. l. t.'s n.)

God[268] into Christ Jesus our Lord Who it is due the glory forever. Amen.

122. (V. 217) This brother who dwelled near to the ill old man commiserated with his helplessness and begged much the Great Oldman to pray for the ill old man.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, you don't leave me in peace. "If you knew the gift from God" (Jn. 4: 19), you would glorified God for God rebukes His servant Andrew, from time to time, as a merciful Father, so that to shut up the devil's filthy mouth, for the devil to have no motif against brother Andrew on judgment day, for brother Andrew have been resting in the great promises heralded him by God, through me the all-unimportant and worthless servant of His[269]. But, what do you reckon? That I do not suffer together with him, more than for any other man? I am suffering together with him. This is because, otherwise, how could be true the word that "if a limb suffers, all the limbs will suffer together with it" (1 Cor. 11: 26)?

If you truly knew the brightness of the things waiting for him, you would be singing together with Paul, thanking, and gladdening yourself up, and saying "are not worthy the sufferings of the present time of the greatness of the things which will be unveiled" (Rom. 8: 18). May God strengthen him and send him His great mercy. I embrace both of you into the Holy Ghost, and I am looking, together with God, at your advancing into Christ our Lord Who it is due the glory forever. Amen.

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[268] Taking the Kingdom by force means forcing yourself. This is for, by this forcing of yourself, or by powerfully taking yourself in your own mastery, you find out in your true self, or through your true self, that Kingdom that is of them who are masters upon themselves, of those who have succeeded to forcedly take themselves into own mastery. This is for in this power of yours to master yourself it is shown the power of God Who has liberated you from all things. And by mastering yourself you will no longer upset your brother and you will meet him into love or into the eternal Kingdom. So, both of you will be comforted and rested by God Whose love you have found it as the love that unites you.

[269] If those troubles did not come upon him, the devil (and not only the devil, but also the devil's envious servants) could say on the judgment day: it was easy to him not to wobble during his earthly life once he knew the promise of the great goods waiting for him and whose downpayment he rejoiced while still being him on earth, by not being upset by troubles.

123. (V. 218) The same brother wanted to serve the old man, according to his power, together with the old man's servant. But the old man, because of his right-reckoning, he didn't want to be served by that brother, due to the word of Abba Theodore from Ferme, who didn't stand to command his disciple (Paterikon, at Isaac 2). That's why he asked the other Oldman concerning that.

The answer of John: May the God of the heavens and of the earth increase your faith, of, your all-honored and all-beloved brother of mine; and may God strengthen your love into His fear in order to fulfill the good decision concerning that brother. This is for, if you toil a little, according to your power, God won't deprive you of the payment for your toil. Therefore, you rest the old man to the extent you can. This is for this is pleasant to God more than the holy religious service and more than the sacrifice. And the old man must not avoid, because of his right-reckoning, to be served by you, but he must thank God and pray for you. This is because he is ill so he doesn't owe to keep Abba Theodore's word who said about the brother: "I am not the leader of the coenobitic community to command him. If he wants to do something, let him do whatever he sees me doing". Abba Theodore said these for he was able to fulfill his needs and even to serve others. But this old man is ill. And each of us must live his life in the fear of God according to his measure and state, and always thanking to God. This is for through him others too will take their payment[270] [271]. Therefore, let him not envy him who wants to obey Him Who says: "I was ill and you served Me" (Mt. 25: 36). This is for God doesn't' ask, as I have heard for many times, from the ill one, except

[270] Through the ill one, as served by others, they who serve him will take their payment from God. That's why one who is ill must not stop others from serving him. This is because of depriving those of their payment. But neither himself must lose his payment by allowing himself to be served because of his comfortableness, of because of his pride caused him by the fact of feeling himself superior because of being older, or of being more taught, or of being in a hierarchical (social) position.

[271] The Oldman John reckons, with a great gentleness, that he who stops somebody from serving him, he actually envies the servant for the payment the servant will receive from God. He reckons as submitted to the temptation of the sin if not allowing to be served. By this, he impeded the servant from advancing into consummation. Therefore, you will allow yourself to be served when you need that, not so much for yourself, but rather for him who wants to serve you. But you must humble yourself for receiving that serving, by reckoning that you take upon yourself the rick of the sin. Only the humbleness melts down the sin that can be into both accepting or rejecting to be served.

thanking and patience. This is for these two mediate, for our helplessness, in front of God[272]. So, according to the right-reckoning, let him not avoid to be served by any of the brothers who wants to toil according to God. And let him not say: "I burden him up, or I am troubling him". But let him say: "he who serves can be equal to them who are tormented by illness if God entrusted him that He will reward him for me. May the Lord save him and may the Lord not condemn me".

You keep these and live in peace, by the grace of Christ our God. "Before all, bear your burdens to one another and so you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6: 2). And in addition to these, let's remember that the death won't be late coming. You must serve the Lord and to your neighbor with fear, so that you will inherit through the Lord the immortal life into Christ Jeus our Lord, and by trusting Him you won't be worried about tomorrow (Mt. 6: 34). This is for the Lord takes care of you. And if we throw our worry upon Him (1 Pt. 5: 7), Himself will take care of us as he wishes. His is due the glory. Amen. I am embracing you into the Lord, asking you to pray for me, out of love.

124. (V. 60) The question of monk Theodore addressed to the Great Oldman: How can I know that thought coming from God and that thought that is from nature and that thought that comes from devils?

The answer of Barsanuphius: Son Theodore, when asking, you must understand that what you ask for, and you must prepare for working for it was said: "Do not cogitate at high things, but let yourself be carried by humble things" (Rom. 12: 16). You ask belongs to a greater measure. If you inward eye hasn't been cleaned through many medicines, it won't be possible to clean it of thorns and brambles, so that to be able to catch that grape that strengthens the heart and gladdens it. If the man doesn't reach this measure, he won't be able to discern among things, so that him to be able to realize that the devils mock him and that he is deceived by trusting them. This is for

[272] The patience and the thankfulness brought to God will defend the ill one for what he hasn't been able to do positively (fasting, ascesis) for God, because of his helplessness.

the devils change the way of the things as they wish, especially to them who do not know their craftsmanships.

My beloved one, trust God and he "will fulfill the asks of your heart" (Ps. 36: 3-4[273]). And you tell Him in everything: "Be it, Lord, not as I want, but as You want" (Mt. 26: 39).

Listen son to the discernment of the thoughts that you have asked about. When the thought urges you to do something according to the will of God, and yourself rejoice of doing that but you also feel a sadness resisting what you are doing, you will know that that thought is from God. Therefore, you must struggle to endure, according to the word of the Apostle: "I bring my enslaved body and I persecute it, lest by preaching to others myself to become disapproved" (1 Cor. 9: 27). And you will fulfill the will of God.

And if there comes a thought from nature, take carefully heed and you will be able to discern it. This is for the godlike Scripture says: "For this the man will leave his father and his mother and he will attach himself to his woman and both of them will be one body" (Gen. 2: 24). But the Apostle, by knowing that the will of God is not only us to leave the things of the devils, but also the things of the nature, because "the body uses to nothing" (Jn. 7: 33), he said: "He who attach himself to woman he is body, but him who attaches himself to the Lord, he is ghost" (1 Cor. 6: 16-18). So, they who want to be spiritual, they must reject the body. This is because, that what is useless will also be damaging. And that what is damaging must be rejected. But them who want to live in the world in a piously, he told them that "the wedding is honored" and so on (Mt. 13: 4).

And the thoughts from the devils are troubled and full of sadness and they hiddenly and subtly attracts to the things from behind. The here put on some sheepskins, namely they take the countenance of some thoughts of the righteousness, "but within they are ravening wolves" (Mt. 7: 15), namely they appear to be useful, but they actually are useless and they "deceive the hearts of the simple ones" (Rom. 16: 18). This is because it was said about the snake that it is very cunning

[273] In KJB we have: Ps. 37: 3-4: "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. // Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."; in ROB we have: Ps. 36: 3-4: "Trust the Lord and do kindness and inhabit the earth and feed yourself with its richness. // Delight yourself into the Lord and He will fulfill the asks of your heart." (E. l. t.'s n.)

(Gen. 3: 15), you will always shun of its head lest it will find its den within you and so it will dwell within you and it will work the desolation within you.

Therefore, if you too want to become spiritual, you will eject the things of the body. This is for, the things denied by somebody he will also reject those. Listen to the Lord Himself saying: "If somebody wants to come after Me, let him reject himself and follow Me" (Mt. 16: 21). But how does the man reject himself if not by leaving the wills of his nature and following to the Lord[274]?

That's why he especially speaks about the things of the nature and not about the contrary-to-nature things. This is because, if somebody leaves only the contrary-to-nature things, he still won't leave anything of his own for God. This is because those things aren't even him[275]. But he who has left his natural things will always shout out with Saint Apostle Paul: "behold, we have left everything and we have followed You. What will be

[274] We have here an explanation of the self-rejection, of the self-denial: it means not a total destruction of the own being, btu it means not fulfilling the needs of his natural life, or the will of this life, so that the man himself fulfills the wild of God with himself. This shows that the man continues existing as subject fulfilling the will of God regarding him, a will that doesn't want the man to exist everywhere but on a superior plan, by being the man filled up with the godlike will. This is the elevation of the man's being from the plan which the man's being wants to life by its own powers within the limits of its earthly needs, on the plan of the existence united with God, in an opening to the powers coming him from God. Properly-said, the man cannot live on a purely natural plan. If the man wants to remain locked up in the natural plan, the man will get haughty, namely the man becomes the slave of a passion coming from the father of the pride, that is the devil, and the man will try and develop his nature by exaggerated impulses which are equally numerous passions. Here, the teaching of the Holy Fathers is totally opposite to the catholic teaching about the possibility of existence of a man's "pure nature". But the passions moving in the horizon on the present world which all things are perishing in, they actually "desolate" the man of his life. The numerous satisfactions provided to the man by these passions will be followed by a general desolation; a desolation anticipated by a partial desolation following to satisfying each individual passion.

About the necessity to leave even the things of the nature, because of not being the things of the nature able to save the man, Barsanuphius is going to talk also in the following rows. But leaving those is an act of a greater courage, of a greater love for God, than it is forsaking the contrary to nature things. Of course, that is possible up to a place where some of the nature's needs must be kept and fulfilled. But some people keep fewer of those than others do. These ones are the monks. It is necessary, though, that both monks and laymen not to maintain the things of the nature separated from the godlike things.

[275] The contrary-to-nature things are the sinful passions. The man can live without those because they are not part of the nature. So, by leaving those for God, the man won't give something form what is necessary to him. But him who gives the things necessary to his nature, he will bring a sacrifice to God. And by that he will be elevated on a superior plan of existence, one that is above-nature. And God sanctifies the sacrifice when He receives it.

with us?" (Mt. 19: 27). And he will heart that blessed word and he will be assured about the promise of the future life. What had Peter left, in order to brag himself, being known that he was not a rich man? He left nothing else but his own natural wills. This is because, if the man doesn't die with the body in order to live with his ghost, he won't be resurrected. And as the things of the nature do not remain with the dead one at all, likewise it is in the case of him who is spiritually dead with the body[276]. So, if you died to your body, how would the natural things live within you?

And if you haven't yet reached the spiritual measure, but you are still a child with your mind, you must humble yourself before your teacher, so that he can rebuke you towards correction: "Do not do anything without asking for advice" (Sirach 35: 29[277]), even if what occurs to you it appears to be good. This is for the devils' light will finally be proven as actually being darkness.

So, everything you hear or think or see, if it troubles you heart no matter how little, it will be from the devils. Receive thins things I've written to you in a few words, by believing that if you sweated into these, God Who bestows all the things, He would destine to you too to advance in order you to be in all things with the saints towards liturgizing and rejoicing together with them and inheriting together with the saints the good things of His, into Christ Jesus our Lord Whom to be the glory forever. Amen.

125. (V. 61) Because the Oldman did not dialogue with anybody except with his servant who was Abba (Serid), the same brother asked in a letter for a discussion with him, saying that Abba Moses too (Paterikon, at Arsenius 38) and the other Fathers had accepted discussions when asked. The Oldman answered

[276] This is not the death of the ghost, btu it is a death of the body for cogitation, for the ghost; namely, this is not a physical death of the body, but it is a body's death into spirit or for the spirit. You must die into your spirit in order you to cross to another resurrection, to another life, like the physical body must die in order to reach the resurrection in such a body. Only they who have defeated the body's things through their ghost, only they will resurrect into happiness.

[277] This book called as *The Book of the Wisdom of Joshua the Son of Sirach* it is not given in the KJB. The interested reader can download it for three from www.academia.edu, together with other thirteen books missing from KJB, translated in English and grouped under the title: *Bible Missing Texts*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

by writing him a letter which he foretold in some things which we knew that they happened because of happening those right to us. For the Oldman told him that he followed to appear to him. Namely how and whom: for "the faithless from Judea" (Rom. 15: 31). And actually, after a while, the brother fell into the temptation of not believing that the Oldman was in his monastic cell and he said that Abba mimed the presence of the Oldman, so that the Oldman called that brother and other brothers living in that place and he showed them his legs. And I wad myself found worthy of that washing[278]*. And so, the brother repented and by remembering the Oldman's answer, he confessed us his faithlessness and the foretelling of the Oldman. And all of us extolled God.*

Behold the answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, "nobody knows the things of another, except the ghost within that man" (1 Cor. 2: 11). Each one knows that what he has inside his house, and that what he has earned in his bag. And according to that he also spends for supporting others. We have the commandment of our Master not to start building us a tower for us, before calculating the expenses (Lk. 14: 28). Count for me the saints who got rich (or: who enrich you) into ghost. And you are gladdening me with your knowledge and even stronger with your deeds. But I examine them and as abundant in good deeds I find them as abundant in evil deeds I find myself. And those worked daringly while I tremble without doing anything, because of his who said: "You who teach another, why don't you teach yourself?" (Rom. 2: 21). And I strive to no longer hear him how he condemns me by saying: "You hypocrite, pull out firstly the beam from your eye" and so on (Mt. 7: 5). And I am striving to get that beam out but I cannot do that. Still, I do not despair, but I trust that I will succeed in doing that. But tell me brother: if somebody told a poor man: "Some people gave alms, you too must give something despite having nothing", could do that that poor man? This is for many thirsty men when joyfully finding the water, they do not try and find the water's spring, of the source of the rain or of the river where are they coming from[279].

[278] The note in the Greek text: Maybe this was Serid, the hegumen of that monastery.

[279] Let's not try to know, theoretically, too much things regarding God Who is the source of our power, but let's use the power given to us. Do not ask a poor man like me, says Barsanuphius, for giving you the knowledge of the mysteries of God which I do not have.

And many people by rejoicing of the shininess of the sun, they do not spy the sun if it is big or small, seen or unseen. And regarding other natural phenomena they do the same. Likewise, the asked Fathers said about God: "Do not search for the Lord and do not ask where He lives" (Paterikon, Sisoes 40).

What could I tell you, because you have left the striving for examining your sins and you want to see me who I am a stinky worm and "dust and ashes" (Job 46: 6)? By I myself, as a mad man, by rejoicing about your question, I sent you an answer because of deluding myself and reckoning that I am something, and because of forgetting that "he who reckons that he is something, by being nothing, he deceived himself" (Gal. 6: 3). But I deluded myself in this and I spoke without being worthy. But you must work like good and obedient worker and do not ask me for that. But I still want to see you and I am embracing you and all the brothers, by being I driven by that love from God. But I'll do that when God will let me know. Then I will throw in person to your feet and I will kiss you, and I will beg you I to be delivered from the faithless ones from Judea. And brother, let's not spend our days in scattering, but let's gain that crying full of tears, in order us to achieve the happiness. And let's live together with the poor and gentle, so that we will become together-inheritors with them[280]. And let's all of us follow the peace, in order us to be together with the sons of God. Let's endure the condemnation and the defamation in order our payment to be multiplied in heavens. Let's strive to show Him as having good deeds, "in order the people to see our good deeds and they to extoll our Father Who is in heavens" (Mt. 5: 3-16). I haven't written you these things in order to refuse you, but because I see myself burdened by many debts. That's why I ceaselessly fall to God and beg Him to bestow me and you the forgiveness of our sins through the prayers of the saints. Amen.

126. (V. 62) The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother who congratulated the Oldman for his virtue and said some words from the Scripture and he asked him if he should reject the fruits and to behave faithfully and

[280] By living with the poor and gentle, we will become as they are, and so we will inherit together with them the Kingdom of Heavens.

obediently as the Fathers do; and about prayer and with the ask for being his ill eyes enlightened.

Brother, it has been fulfilled through you the Scripture that says: "My people, they who congratulate you, they delude you" (Isa. 9: 16). Such a congratulation (praise) does not allow us to see the sham of our deeds. It harms, as I reckon, even them who reached the measure and it separated them form their faith in God. This is for the lord says: "How can you believe in Me, while receiving the praise from one another?" (Jn. 5: 44). He who understand the Apostle's humbleness rather choses the insanity so that later on he will become wise (1 Cor. 3: 18)[281]. This is for he who wants to show himself as knower (gnostic) and not rather spiritual (pneumatic), I wondered if he could escape the damnation appointed to him through his nature itself[282]. And about the humble ones it is written that they will take grace (Prov. 3: 34). Anyone who praises the sweetness of God's words, but he doesn't nourish himself with that sweetness, he will make that sweetness to seem bitter. Is it bitter the word that says: "If somebody want to come after me, let him reject himself and take his cross and follow Me" (Mt. 16: 24)? And, if it is sweet, why, by wanting to fulfill our own will, we reject that? He who shows himself as knowing the path leading to the stronghold, he asks about it either out of despise,

[281] He who does the deed in order him to be praised by others and he who enjoys the praises brought him by others, he will be proven as unwise in the end. On the opposite, him who doesn't aim to obtain such praises and therefore he doesn't cherish such praises at all, thought without him doing the evil, he will be proven as wise in the end, because he hasn't become weak in searching for the vain-gloriousness.

[282] The nature gets weakened within them who search for praise from others, or it will be rather proven as weak. What will he do if he is no longer praised? And certainly, the praises brought him, for he is seen as desiring praises and imposing to be praised, are not sincere and they won't last for long. Those praises won't last after him no longer having the power to impose them. Even they who willingly praise someone, they unwillingly condemn him in their thoughts while thy praise him with their mouths; and if they no longer are interested in praising him, they will openly condemn him. And the praises are searched for by him who shows himself as knower of the commandments, but he doesn't fulfill the commandments as the spiritual man does. He who fulfills the commandment he will become a servant so that he will humble himself. By this he is a spiritual man and he won't search for praise. He doesn't even want to tell you that he knows about that commandment. He who wants to show that he knows that commandment, he actually doesn't know it, but he only wants to brag himself with his knowledge. His knowledge remains at the surface of the things. Applying the knowledge it will imprint one's own being. That one will herald the fulfillment of the commandments by his life.

or because of intending to temp the inquired one and to laughs at it. And if he knows the path but he doesn't walk on it, he will be judged as one who disregards the path. Abba Arsenius had the knowledge, but he didn't show it (Paterikon, Arsenius 5), for he said: "I want to save myself but I don't know how to do that" (Paterikon, Anthony and Arsenius 5). So, if somebody shows the path to his brother but he doesn't take care of himself walking that path, we will be reckoned as guilty. And the path is this: the past things which we have thrown behind us not to be allowed to attract us again to our former things. Otherwise, we will be again in that place where we have come out from, and therefore we will be worthy to be despised as ones who toils vainly. This is for him who wants to know the road, if he doesn't walk that road together with him who knows that road consummately, he won't aver arrive to the city. Throw away your will and humble yourself for the whole your life and you will be saved.

Regarding the fruits, do not ask for them out of your own will. But if fruits are given to you, you will eat them while sighing for the condemnation brought you by such a pleasure[283]. And because you are talking about the saints, you follow their obedience and faith shown by them in their deeds. This is for the faith without deeds was proven as dead (Jas. 2: 26). And because you are talking about obedience, you must know that there is no better obedience than that shown in submission. This is for the obedience consist of submission. And somebody said: "The obedient son will live".

And regarding your eyes, almighty is Him who created them and he also can enlighten them together with your inward eyes, which we saw with, according to our Savior's words, we wouldn't need the external eyes which see the vanity of the world.

Almighty is God so that He can give us to be together with those who will be saved, towards the glory of His all-holy name. Amen.

[283] So, you can eat but cut off as much as you can the pleasure brought you by eating fruits, or wait for the condemnation for that pleasure.

127. (V. 63) The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same brother whoa sked him: Who has given the devil his power and the mastery?

If you want to know what you do not need to know: who has given the devil his power and mastery, let yourself know it out of this, and do not make God, because of your nescience, the cause of the evils. Take an example from yourself. If somebody among you tends willingly to evil and he does that evil, he will be judged by God as one who did the evil willingly. But you ask: Who has given him his will? If God has given him his will, why do you judge him? I am telling you, do not show God as wanting the evil, because of the fact that the devil crooked the will. That's not so, let it not be! Even despite some of the saints told that, the meaning they told that with it is totally unknown to you. They said that God gave power and mastery to the devil because God doesn't' stop the devil from committing the evil. So must you understand that word: "I have made Pharaoh's heart callous" (Exod. 10: 1). You are asking: If it is so, why do you blame him[284]? He tells that because he hasn't punished him previously. This can be known by somebody also form the Book of Job. This is for it is said in that book that the devil destroyed the wealth and the sons of Job. But you can hear Job saying: "The Lord has given, the Lord has

[284] This is the problem of the theodicean that attempt to get God out from under the guilt of the existence of the evil in the world. Leibnitz answered that this world is the best possible world. Anyway, this world can reach a height which there is no other above it. This is known to faithlessness. To faithlessness the world remains totally what the world is. Therefore, the faithlessness cannot find an explanation for the evil. According to the Christian teaching the world can be deified by grace. The people (all the conscious beings) have in themselves and in the world and in the help from God all the necessary conditions for their deification. The angels too can reach there. Even the people on earth could live in peace. The evil is caused by the wrongly-used freedom, on one hand by angels and on the other hand by the people allowing themselves to be tempted by the evil angels and by their body, by wrongly using their freedom. The evil angels can alco harm the people by the destructions caused in nature. There is a secret possibility of the spirit working upon nature. But a world without freedom would be an unbearable prison to the conscious beings. The absence of the freedom cannot be reconciled except with the absence of the conscience. But such a world would be a totally inferior world, a world unworthy of the power of God. God allows the free conscious beings to do the evil too, for He respects their conscience and freedom. But God also makes out of His freedom as well and out of those beings' struggle with the temptations, a possible spiritual strengthening of the human beings. This is for the man must grow up with his collaboration as well, towards his glory as son of God by grace.

taken, for how the Lord reckoned He has done it. Be the name of the Lord blessed forever" (Job. 1: 21).

Why, therefore, didn't job spoke about the destructor, but he spoke about Him Who is long-patient and able to impede and to stop the evil? But take heed at the fact that God didn't tell to the devil for nothing else: "Behold I am giving him into your hands" (Job 1: 12), but only because God wanted to show the cause of the confession of the righteous Job was for Job had all the blessing from God. So, God is shown as the one who gave the devil power and mastery, because of not impeding the devil (form doing the evil). This is for God entrusted the devil with a good mastery and after giving that mastery to the devil God hasn't take it back from him; but the devil, after receiving his mastery, he has become disobedient and instead of it he has put on the doing of the evil things. So, God showed Himself as not impeding the devil for He is the One Who have the devil his power. It is not written: He didn't receive the blessing and God removed it from him; but it is written: "and it will be removed from him" (Ps. 108: 17[285])[286].

Therefore, you smut not reckon God as the cause of the evils, because that will bring you damnation. But the devils himself chose to himself this power of doing the evil and God didn't impede him. This is for it is said: "And he loved the curse and it came upon him" (Ps. 108: 16[287]) it doesn't say that the Lord gave it to him. Therefore, you smut stay steadfast into the lord, in the faith that He is the Chieftain of our life and of all good things. And forgive me for I have allowed myself to be attracted in childish questions and I have left the care for my consummation. My children, may the Lord bless and increase your fruits in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

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[285] In KJB we have: Ps. 109: 18: "As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones."; in ROB we have: Ps. 108: 17: "And he has put on the curse like a coat and he entered within him like the water and like the oil it entered his bones." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[286] The Scripture doesn't say that God gave the power to devil or to any other perpetrator of the evil; but the devil is the one who doesn't use his power towards good and towards be him blessed. The Scripture says that the devil won't reach the blessing because he is using wrongly the power given to him.

[287] In KJB we have: Ps. 109: 18: "As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him."; in ROB we have" Ps. 108: 16: "And he loved the curse and the curse will come upon him; and he didn't want the blessing and the blessing will be removed from him." (E. l. t.'s n.)

Scholium[288]*:* In these words, the bearer-of-God Father shows limpidly that he who strives for salvation must not search for the gift of the science. This is for the science makes haughty, as the Apostle says. It is appropriate you to ask about passions and about how you should lead your life. This is for this is necessary and it leads to humbleness. And the humbleness is the shortened salvation: "I humbled myself and the Lord saved me" says someone among the saints. "The humble monk won't inquire the untold realities, and the proud one will inquire the judgments[289]. To a physician who asks whether he should occupy himself more with his medicine books that with the passions, for thus we reach the consummation, by being us delivered from the slavery of the passions, the saint told him that the doctor should occupy with both of them in a due manner and with right-reckoning. And by saying: "Forgive me because I allowed myself to be attracted by childish questions", he hints at or rather he plainly shows that such questions are full of childish thinking and they are also full of much nescience. And besides that, such questions are also full of an awful pride.

128. (V. 64) The question of the same brother addressed to the other Oldman: Why should I do, Father, for I am tormented by the thought that I left my children and my wife and they remained defenseless?

The answer of John: It is written in Paterikon about a certain man that by being wronged by somebody he went to an old man and told him: "I have been wronged by somebody and I want to avenge myself". And the old man told him: "No, son, but let's leave to God the things of the avenge". But because of not convincing that brother, the old man said: "Let's make a prayer". And starting the prayer, the old man commenced by saying with a loud voice so that the brother could hear: "Lord God for we no longer need You to take care of us, because we make justice by ourselves". The brother, pricked by those

[288] This scholium is given in the Volos Edition in the actual text.
[289] This is said by John Climacus.

words, said: "Forgive me, Abba, for I will no longer seek for avenge" (Sisoes 1).

So, lo what I am saying to you, brother: if we take care of ourselves and of our wife and of our children, God no longer will take care of them; but if we leave them, God will take care of us and of them. So, you must not reckon that you ought to take care of them, or to pray for them, lest by having them in your memory some passions to be stirred up within your soul.

129. (V. 65) The question of the same brother towards the same Oldman: What should I do because it persists within me strongly the sadness for parting with my wife?

The answer of John: It was written about man and woman that "both of them will be one body" (Gen. 2: 24). So, like certain part of the body is cut off, the remaining body suffers until the wound will heal and then the pain ceases, likewise in your case you must suffer because of the cutting off of your body.

130. (V. 66) The answer of the Great Oldman towards the same brother to the same question.

If "him who has faith everything is possible" (Mk. 9: 23), where is your faith[290]? Or, if you have chosen to yourself the way of a dead man, aske the dead man if he desires his wife, or will he be condemned because, when his wife has come, he fornicated with her? If you left the dead ones to bury their dead ones, why don't you preach the Kingdom of God (Lk. 9: 60)? For how long will you continue sleeping? Take vigil and shout out with David: "Do not lean my heart towards fornication, you the cunning one, so that I will search for justifications in sins" (Ps. 140: 4[291]). If you have understood more than all of them who

[290] Why do you whine while knowing that "him who has faith everything is possible"? Where is your faith, if you reckon that you cannot overcome your sadness cause you by your separation from your wife?

[291] In KJB we have: Ps. 141: 4: "Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practise wicked works with men that work iniquity: and let me not eat of their dainties."; in ROB we have: Ps. 140: 4: "Do not deviate my heart towards cunning words, so that I will justify my sins; and

teach you (Ps. 118: 99[292]), the cunning demons which surround your heart they increase, with even more strength, the war of the thinking at woman[293]. But where has been hidden from you the word of the Scripture: "Faithful is God Who won't let us to be tempted" (1 Cor. 10: 13)? And if we suffer these things because of our helplessness, let one not blame the sun because of not lightening him or because of not helping him. And what do you thing that it was thinned up for, the man's soul like a spider web, after he has been punished for his iniquity (Ps. 38: 15[294]), and what do your hands become weak for, even before you starting the war? If Him Who crushes all the enemies together with is, He is powerful, why do we slander Him that he stays far from us because of our faithlessness and laziness? If nobody is stronger than He is and if you brag yourself by saying: "You are with me" (Ps. 22: 4[295]), why do you fear and tremble while having Him with you? Hosw your love and you will take a little from the heavenly fire which the Master of everyone has come to throws it on earth (Lk. 12: 43). This is for "when the tares will be sown by the enemy" (Mt. 13: 25), to be the tares burnt and consumed by fire. Burn incense on this fire so that our Lord may receive the good fragrance of your incense and to bring that good fragrance in front of His Father together with the life-giver Ghost and to come and make His dwelling place within you, without your church, which you present yourself in, to Him, as living, holy, and well-pleasant to Him

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with the people who perpetrate lawlessness I won't accompany myself with their chosen ones." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[292] In KJB we have: Ps. 119: 99: "I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation."; in ROB we have Ps. 118: 99: "More than my teachers I have understood, for my thinking is at Your testimonies." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[293] If you have understood and if you have rejected other temptations more than other people have done, the demons will bring the stronger war of the thinking at woman. Or: as you know more than others know, who weren't married, the demons bring within you, with more strength, the war of the thinking at woman.

[294] In KJB we have: Ps. 39: 11: "When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity. Selah."; in Rob we have: Ps. 38: 15: "And You have thinned up his soul as a spider web; but vainly gets disturbed any earthling." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[295] In KJB we have: Ps. 23: 4: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me;"; in ROB we have: Ps. 22: 4: "For if I even walk in the middle of the death, I won't fear evil things; for You are with me." (E. l. t.'s n.)

sacrifice[296]. And then, by being warmed up by this fire, you will always desire to be together-traveler, together-citizen, and together-inheritor with the saints who have been victorious in these things, and who have reached the realities: "which the eye hasn't seen, the ear hasn't heard, and at the man's heart haven't ascended, which God has prepared for them who love Him" (1 Cor. 2: 9), into Christ our lord Whom the glory is due forever. Amen.

131. (V. 67) The question of the same brother towards the other Oldman:" Why should I do, Father, for I am scared at night?

The answer of John: The inhabitants of the city fear the barbarians until the help from their Emperor arrives. But when they find out that the duke or the general has arrived within that city, they no longer fear for they know that those ones will take care of them. Even if they hear that the barbarians are coming, they will no longer worry, for they have the ones who fight for them. So, us too, if we believe in God, we won't fear the devils. This is for God sends us His help.

132. (V. 219) A certain brother having three thoughts and wanting to ask the Great Oldman about those thoughts, that brother asked him not clearly and openly but by riddles, intending to hide his thoughts from Abba. So, that brother wrote a few letters and by thinking at the things he wanted to ask about, he imprinted in his mind the thought letters as connected

[296] The incense represents the sacrifice of our being. But this incense must be ignited by the warmth of our love so that to ascend to God. In state of sacrifice our being spreads a feeling liberated from egotism, one that is pleasant to God as a good fragrance. But our being is ignited by the fire of the love and by the urge to bestow ourselves as sacrifice to the Father, only for this fire comes to us from Christ Who is the supreme and full of love sacrifice. By that, we are united in the state of sacrifice with Christ, or Christ in state of sacrifice takes within Himself and within His fragrance as sacrifice bestowed to the Father, also the fragrance of our sacrifice. Attracted by this state of ours, which we place ourselves in totally at the disposal and totally open to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, the Holy Trinity will dwell within us as in a temple, in which the Holy Trinity is offered the sacrifice of our being. Our being is both temple and sacrifice to God, and full of the warmth of the sacrifice of Christ and of the good fragrance of the total surrender to God as come within us and united with us. This paragraph is influenced by the writing *Worshipping in Ghost and Truth* belonging to Saint Cyril of Alexandria (G.P. 68).

with those points. And those letters were: first was "i" relatedly to which he imprinted in his mind his question about the full quietude and about the consummate silence without dialoguing with anybody; the second letter was "k", related to food, as sign for the question if he should eat dry food and without wine and if he ought to sustain only himself and his servant; the third letter was "l", which he asked if he must meet somebody and if he could loosen at all the harshness of his diet.

The Oldman answered those: "Do not deviate either to the left or to the right" (Prov. 4: 27), until both of them will be done with right-reckoning[297].

133. (V. 220) The same brother addressed to the same Great Oldman another question, which he didn't told either openly or by riddles connected to letters, as he did for the first time, but only by thinking it with his mind. It was a question related to the burden of the sleep and to the soul's weakness and he also asked for help and prayer for his salvation; and he asked also what meant the saying from the previous answer he received: until both of them will be done with right-reckoning. To this the Oldman answered:

The first thing is damaging, the second thing is useful. And the more damaging the first this is, the more useful the second thing will be.

134. (V. 221) Because of this answer letting him bewildered, the brother begged to find out who what the first damaging thing is and what should he do in order to get rid of that thing. And what does it mean the answer about those two?

And he answered: All the things are right to them who understand. The nature itself teaches us. And regarding what those two are, I said that about you, the one who asks and the one who serves for the answer to be received. Regarding the sleep, it is about soul and body. This is because, if the body is

[297] The explanation for those is given in the letter no. 137.

not enslaved to the ghost, the body won't be able to weaken its passions. That's why I brought the thought near to one another.

135. (V. 222) Because the brother remained again bewildered by the things said about the bringing the thoughts close together, he asked: What does that mean?

And the Oldman answered him: forgive me for the Lord, for I am speaking stupidly. The Lord said to His disciples: "Now you do not understand it either?" (Mt. 15: 16). Point one and point two are the same.

136. (V. 223) When the brother heard those, he told to the Oldman: Father, I am entrusting my soul to the mercies of God and to your hands. Pray for the salvation of my humble soul.

The answer through letter: Brother, let's pay attention to ourselves with much heed. This is because of being impossible to quickly take heed at things. If the Apostle who took (the reward), said about himself that he didn't take it (Phil. 3: 12), how much more must we be humble, because of being us nothing? We accepted to receive thoughts in riddles and to answer in riddles too. This is for those give birth in the soul of the thought, especially to the beginners, a spiritual rumination. This is for by researching the riddles, we will find much benefit coming out of them. But the Apostle urged us saying: "Do not cogitate at the high things, but let yourselves be caried towards the humble things" (Rom. 12: 16). That's why do not always tell your thought in riddles. This you won't understand my meaningless answers and that will lead us to a ceaseless entanglement. Verily, it is of no use us to speak or to write to one another always in riddles, even if we have seen that we have received this gift, but let's do so only when needed[298]. Once we are limbs to one another, and once we also know that "the brother helped by the brother is like a fortified stronghold" (Prov. 18: 19), say your thoughts or write your thought plainly through the brother and so you will find the answer to them in

[298] That what is said here it matches also the speaking in languages (glossolalia).

the same manner[299]. This is for this is a humbleness sign for both of us. Tell my what do we need for, to speak in an elevated manner, while we can remain into humbleness? Do that too, but more rarely. This is for it is beneficial to the heart the crushing that accompany the thoughts. This thing made you tell me: "I entrust my soul and my body". And if somebody thinks to obey his brother for God, that supposes that he obeys God[300]. Therefore, only God can wake us up from the sleep of the thought (spiritual) drunkenness[301]. And as you asked me to pray for you, I am asking you for the same thing. It is a word from Scripture. And in the same place it is told that this one is a healing word too (Jas. 5: 16).

Therefore, because the two point were difficult to you to understand, behold I am telling them plainly: in the first letter was specifically about you and my son Serid: the second point was about soul and body, which have the same meaning as the bodily and the spiritual. This is for it is said: "If two of you will get along, anything they ask for they will get" (Mt. 18: 19). But this can be understood also about all of us. This is for, if we do

[299] The speaking is for sustaining and for warming up the brotherhood among us, and that won't be achieved there where we do not understand the answer. This purpose of the speaking is comprised in the Romanian term "cuvântul" = conventus, meaning coming to one place0 in understanding. The word is not given to us in order us to brag with it to one another. If we do that, that will separate us. In order us to come to the good-understanding, we must talk to one another without pride, with humbleness, while paying attention to one another. On word depends the humbleness and the reciprocal respect. Our people are "cuviincios" (Romanian word for decent) in speaking, namely they speak so that through word to be accomplished the "coming-together" (convenientia). The Son of God Himself made Himself example of humbleness to us, by impropriating the human word. But this is for Himself is the potential bosom of the words. We depend on Him as embodied words, and we are called to unite ourselves into Him through our words. He asks us to talk to one another and to answer to one another in order us to be united with Him.

[300] Obeying somebody for God means obeying God Who asks for that. Actually, God asks us to obey to one another. This is the opposite to the pride that divides us. Obeying each of us the word of another it means obeying us to another and through him us will obey God. It means both of us obeying to God Who has given to each of us the word for another, that word which the other listens to.

[301] God, by asking me through another to take heed at another and at Him, He wakes me up to reality, out of the sleep of my pride that makes me reckoning myself as the sole existing and master over all things, and stretched with my poverty into an infinite sin, like him who is drunk and he no longer knows about anybody and about anything or even about himself. By the words of another I am wakened up to the uncrossing reality, but also a joyful reality of my debts, of my border, but also of a truly infinite reality that is richer than mine and his, and with which – by fulfilling my duties and by love – I can be imparted with.

not get along with one another, there won't be shown to us any clean living.

Therefore, pray brother for us to exit in peace our few days. This is for nothing comes haphazardly. "He who attached himself to the Lord he will be one Ghost with Him" (1 Cor. 6: 17). May the Lord give us to finish the crossing of this sea unharmed, into His name. This is for Him it is due the glory forever. Amen. Achieve humbleness, and patience, and hope, and that love for God that is greater than all things.

137. (V. 68) The question of the same brother addressed to the same Great Oldman, send by a letter: Forgive me, Father. "The righteous will rebuke me mercifully and he will reproach me" says the Holy Scripture (Ps. 140: 5[302]). Like the physician, by burning or by cutting the wound, he knows that the ill one will pick up the fruit of the healing, likewise he who is ill he know when he is cut and that hurts him, that he is expected to be healed in a short time, for the Scripture says: "Base on the testimony of two, or of three witnesses, every word is proven" (The Second Law 19: 15). What I said, now I am saying that again. Behold, I am surrendering myself to God and to Your Piousness. This is for I am realizing that I haven't come here by my own. Therefore, by knowing my things, you teach me. This is because my heart is mastered by much confusion of the passions and of the thoughts. I am ready to accept, by the will of God, with the whole my heart, and joyfully, the things coming from you, with the help of your prayer done by you for me. And I will write you and talk to you as Abba commanded me.

The answer towards the same one by letter: Brother, behold I am sending you, by the lenience of God, this second letter which I beg your love by, into God, to wake up your sleepy thought (spiritual) eye which stays drowsy because of idleness, so that it won't fall asleep into death (Ps. 12: 4[303]). Take vigil so

[302] In KJB we have: Ps. 141: 5: "Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities."; in ROB we have: Ps. 140: 5: "The righteous will rebuke me mercifully and he will reproach me; and may the oil of the sinners not to touch my head; and even my prayer is against their wills." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[303] In KJB we have: Ps. 13: 4: "Consider and hear me, O Lord my God: lighten mine eyes, lest

that your mind to understand "to cross the good land" (Jos. 18: 8), lest your land to sprout out thorns and brambles which to chick up the crop, as it was said: "All around the ungodly walk" (Ps. 11: 8)[304]. But strong is him who can crush their yoke and their horn quickly. Amen.

137. (bis) Cogitation about the letter "e" (eta)[305]. One of the fathers having three thoughts, he asked the Great Oldman about those thoughts which he had, but not in a limpid manner, but by riddles, because he wanted to hide his thoughts from Abba Serid who served as secretary for answer. So, by writing the three letters form the alphabet, he sent them to the Great Oldman, after he imprinted in his mind the question related to each of those letters. The Great Olman answered him, also in riddles, by thoroughly understanding each one of the questions. But the Great Oldman stopped the brother from asking future questions formulated in riddles, by telling him that that is not matching the humbleness and in brings disturbance in both of them, namely both to him who asks questions and to him who answers those questions. This is because both question and answer are equally non-understood and darkened. And that stirs up bewilderment in all of them.

The same Great Oldman wrote him and to other few old men who asked him questions, some thoughts and theological teachings in an alphabetical order, by relating each letter to God. He gathered in the same place, under the explained letter, words beginning with the same letter, and then he developed in details, in diverse cogitations, a detailed explanation of each word. By choosing in this exposition a part of the thoughts about the letter "e" (eta), we are going to present them here as an example of the

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I sleep the sleep of death;"; in ROB we have; Ps. 12: 5: "Look at me, hear me, Lord, my God, enlighten my eyes, lest I will fall asleep into death." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[304] In KJB we have: Ps. 12: 8: "The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted."; in ROB we have" Ps. 11: 8: "This is because, when the worthless people raise themselves up, the lawless will teem everywhere." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[305] The paragraphs starting from here and all the way to the other horizontal line, except for the last paragraph (V. 837(, are given only by the French translation according to the three Codices (Vatopedi 2, Sinai 410, and Pantelimon 192). These paragraphs are some sort of cogitation on the letter "eta" (e) and they are addressed to the same brother whoa sked by riddles about those three thoughts of his. These paragraphs start with a reminder of the three epistles (132-136). This writing of Barsanuphius hasn't been preserved.

wonderful interpretation given by the Great Oldman to the entire alphabet, for he was asked to do that.

a) η (eta) means guide. Guide is him who guides. He guides you to light, and he doesn't search for darkness. He guides you on the straight path, he doesn't search for lie. He guides you to truth, he doesn't guide you to delusion. He guides you to peace, he doesn't search for war. He guides you to joy, he doesn't run to sadness. He guides you to humbleness, he doesn't go towards pride. He guides you to justice, he doesn't search for injustice. He guides you to endure the reproaches and the mockeries brought to you, he doesn't search for praise and vain-glory. He guides you to the death of your former man, he doesn't search for a pleasant living. He guides you to the right hand, he doesn't place you among them who are on the left hand (Mt. 25: 33). He guides you to the eternal life, not to the eternal damnation from the Gehenna of the unquenched fire (Mt. 9: 43). The sign that it is rejected what must be rejected it is the choosing of the good things and not-forsaking any of the daily or nightly prayers. Let him rejoice into the Lord, him who has reached these, he who is reaching, and he who hopes for reaching them.

b) ε (eta) means the right hand of the Father. If you are on the right hand, do not run to the left, in order you not to lose the power from around you. This is for "the right hand of the Lord raised me up, the right hand of the Lord unfolded its strength" (Ps. 117: 16[306]). The Lord is the strength of them who fight and especially of those who remain under the shelter of His right hand. There are also some ones who are awake and who always supervise themselves carefully, in order they not to lose such sheltering through the covetousness of their belly, through debauchery, through avarice, through sadness, through idleness, through anger, through wrath, through full of enmity speaking, through hatred, through vain-gloriousness, through pride, or simply through any seed thrown by Amalec in the thought land of the promises. The sign that the man is saved it is this cleanness of all of these, and the fact of singing, like the angels do, to God. Let him rejoice into the Lord him who

[306] In KJB we have: Ps. 118: 16: "The right hand of the Lord is exalted: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly."; in ROB we have: Ps. 117: 16: "The right hand of the Lord elevated me, the right hand of the Lord made power!" (E. l. t.'s n.)

has reached there, he who will reach, and he who hopes reaching there.

c) ε (eta) means the immortal sacrifice brought for the life of the world and anyone who eats it he will truly be brought at his turn, and he will no longer be submitted to the thought (spiritual) rottenness[307]. This is for in Him are abolished the things of the devil, and his passions and thoughts, which hide within man as some worms[308]. This is for he says about this: "in it the foxes make their burrows, namely the devils, and "the fowls of the sky make their nests", namely the powers from the sky, and "the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head down" (Mt. 8: 20). He who cogitates that he has been brought as sacrifice, let him therefore examine himself in order him to see if these worms are still within him, and if he no longer finds anything, it will be obvious that he died with Jesus and he lives with Jesus and he sits with Jesus into glory[309]. And the assurance that he sits with Jesus, he has it in the word of our Savior Who prays for they who believe in Him to be one with Him, as Himself and the Father are (Jn. 17: 20-21). The believers who have been cleaned up of their passions, they are, therefore, into the Son and in His Father, in unity. Let rejoice into the Lord him who has reached there, he who will reach there, and he who hopes reaching there.

d) ε (eta) it means the joy of the Father. And the joy of the Father is His Son; in Him the choirs of the angels rejoice. Trusting Him, the saints fight. Through Him has been elevated the curse from on earth. Through Him was erased on the cross the bill that was upon us (Col. 2: 14), so that we are no longer slaves to our enemy. So, you must escape our enemy's slavery,

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[307] Here too it can be felt the influence of Saint Cyril of Alexandria, that we cannot enter where the Father is, except in state of clean sacrifice, and in this state, we cannot be, except into Christ. The feeling of total surrender, namely clean of any egotism, we cannot have it but into Christ or in union with Christ.

[308] That one is chewed by worms; He is being torn apart by those while living through those his state of unperishing decomposition. Under the mask of the short live satisfactions, as some spasms, there is hidden a deep unhappiness.

[309] He who has brought himself as sacrifice, he has freed himself of his egotistic passions, and he lives in the quietude and into the freedom of son of God by grace, like Christ after His resurrection. Nothing scares him anymore, nothing worries him any longer, he is above all things, he feels himself united with the Father and with the Son and with the Holy Ghost, into the happy love. He feels himself on the plan of the absolute love and freedom. Free of egotism, he will fly in the light of the communion with everybody. To him are open the frontiers of all, especially the frontiers of the Person of the Holy Trinity.

so that us to be in the service of "Him Who has called us with holy calling" (2 Tim. 1: 9), "into the novelty of the Holy Ghost and not in the oldness of the letter: (Rom. 7: 6). This makes us saints, for Himself says: "Be holy as I am holy" (Lk. 19: 2)[310]. Liberated from curse, let's not become again slaves, but let's remain in liberty[311]. This is for it is said to you: "Behold, you have been healed, sin no longer lest something worse to happen to you" (Jn. 5: 14). And the sign of reaching this stage of consummation is the guarding of the received freedom until the last breath. Let him rejoice into the Lord, him who has reached there, he who will reach there, and he who hopes reaching there.

e) ε (eta) means Him. And He is God[312]. This is for Isaiah the Prophet said: "Emanuel" (Isa. 4: 7) and the godlike Matthew, the holy evangelist of the untold joy, explained that like this: Eman = with us; He = God. If we have got far from evils and if we have estranged ourselves from the evils' craftsman who is the devil, then God will truly be with us. If our pleasure for evil things has become bitter to us, and if our desire for good deed has got sweetened, and if we all the time have our living into heavens (Phil. 3: 20), then God will truly be with us. If we see all the people as one and if we see all the days as equal, then God will truly be with us[313]. If we love them who condemn us, who reproach us, who despise us, who harm us, and who troubles us, as we love those who love us, who praise us, who are beneficial to us, and who rest us, then God will be truly with us. And the sign that somebody has reached this measure it is that he will always have God with him. This is for, actually, God is

[310] If we are sensitive to the word about Christ, which Christ Himself works in, we will feel in our conscience His calling or claim upon us, and the need for us to answer Him affirmatively. We will feel in this attractive calling the work of the Ghost of living Christ, and not a commandment known out of the letter of the Scripture, one regarded as exterior to God.

[311] God is the source of our freedom, for He is above the enslaving passions. We too become in God free of any passions and masters over ourselves. Only the living by yourself, or the living in connection with somebody who wants to enslave you, it will make a slave of you. The communion with the one who loves you, and who doesn't want to enslave you, it will make you free, as well. This is for the loved one wants and can answer his love.

[312] In the Hebrew language *He* means God.

[313] Seeing all the people as one means not to reckon some people as good while reckoning the others as evil, or seeing no man as evil, but it means looking at all people with the same love. If we are mastered by love, that will be a sign that God is with us. And if we are so, we will not longer change from a day to another, but on all days our being is full of love, or full of God. Then we will be free, for we are no longer mastered by our passions.

always with him. And he who is not like so, he won't have God with him, but he will have only the things of the contrary one. And they who have mind they know the consequence.

138. (V. 69) The answer of the same Great Oldman towards one who was living in quietude, and who asked him about his servant; and about receiving the thoughts; and about the bodily relatives.

Brother, I am speaking to you as to my soul. It was written: "Let your knowledge not to be offense to your weaker brothers" (1 Cor. 8: 9). Your brother who serves you is a simple man. Do not try and teach him how to be wise. This is because, otherwise, you will elicit his anger. And you must be satisfied by the fact that he accepts to attend your needs. You better not elicit him any thought about wisdom, lets you will disturb his heart.

It is characteristic to the consummate ones to allow the thought to enter their heart and then they will get that thought out. But you must not allow the fire to enter the forest, lest it will burn down that forest. You must not allow your clothes to be take away from you, lest you will must fight for taking your clothes back to you. You must not play with the disturbance, because you will not remain steadfast in that temptation. Therefore, take heed at you and pray for me.

Regarding the bodily relatives, once our Lord said: "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" (Mt. 12: 48), you cannot transgress the commandment of God by remaining in connection with your bodily brothers. And if you think that they need clothes, why don't you think at the poor ones? "I was naked, and you clothed me up" (Mt. 25: 36)[314]. But once you have reached the toy of the devils, you will again remember them whom you left for God, and so you will break your promise. Woe to us, brother, how those ones do with us! Do you want to love them with that love you ought to have for all people? Pray for them for they to be saved too by the grace of Christ. Take heed at you lest you will be the devils' mockery.

[314] Here too we have an application of the advice to reckon all the people as one, or according to their needs. If somebody need clothes more than you brother need clothes, you must dress that one up and not your brother.

This is for, by leaving the syllables, we have turned ourselves back to alphabet[315]. Struggle for you to die, if you want to save yourself[316]. You must search for being disregarded and you must run towards what lays ahead of you. Do not allow the devil to plant within you a useless worry under the mask of some righteous thing. Do not take care of anything[317]. Either they die or they live, you must not send them anything. Remember the Lord Who says: "Let the dead to bury their dead" (Lk. 9: 60). Take heed at yourself. This is for not those will save you on that fearsome day. I have been telling you often: wake yourself up from the too heavy sleep, for you do not know the time when our Lord comes, so that you must always be prepared (Mt. 24: 42[318]).

Regarding the defilements, they bring falling to the soul. You must love Jesus with the whole your heart and you won't ever fall. Peace to you in the love of our Lord[319]. Peace to you in the holy kiss.

139. (V. 70) Someone among prices who was living in quietude (in withdrawal), he asked the same Great Oldman to pray for him.

The answer of Barsanuphius: When somebody sends an advocate to defend him in front of the emperor, he always prays for that advocate to be listened to. This is for not the advocate will be listened to, but his request he sent it to the emperor.

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[315] A monk who has recently entered the monastery, he will haven't reached such a high level. But he still is on a superior level than the level of living within the world. That is a "tuning back" to that state from before Adam's sin. From this level the monk must ascend to other higher levels: to words, to speech, and not to turn back to syllables.

[316] Struggle for you to die to your former man, namely to die to the "dead" life, so that you will be able to enter the true immortal life which we will gain it out of God Who is the spring of life, when we unite ourselves with God.

[317] In this too, it is shown our freedom from being slaved to the things, or to the people, and by doing this we will be light as in the Kingdom of God.

[318] That's why our Lord doesn't unveil us the time of His coming (or the time of our death), in order us to continuously strengthen yourselves through ceaseless watchfulness, so that we continuously progress by always doing the good and by always rejecting the evil thoughts we have against others. Like the man doesn't grow up bodily by taking recesses in his growing up, likewise, the man must not take recesses in his spiritual growing up.

[319] Only in loving our neighbor we can have peace. Only in loving the Person-like God we will have rest, and that rest is not a simple non-work, but it is a joy which we will never get bored of, or which we will never get satisfied of (in the Origenistic sense).

Likewise, you too must pray for I to be listened to (by God). This is for, I obey you and I am praying together with you for the health of your body and of your soul. And if I am listened to (and God listens to everyone), I will attribute that to your own prayers[320]. And I am not even an advocate worthy of defending you, but I only reckon myself as a sent servant. So, may the Lord listen to our prayers. Pray for my wickedness.

140. (V. 71) The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: How must I pray? Must I say "Our Father" as our Lord taught us (Mt. 6: 9-13)? Or must I pray as Abba Makarios from Scetis told us: "Lord, have mercy on me, as You wish", and when the war occurs: "Lord, if You wish, help me"? Wasn't "Our Father" appointed only to the consummate ones?

"Our Father" has been ordered both to the consummate and to the sinners. And this is for, the consummate ones by knowing that they have reached to be sons of God, they to strive and not fall, and the sinners, by calling with shame that Father often cursed by them, they to fearfully turn back and to come to repentance. And I reckon that it even fits rather the sinners. This is for it belongs to the sinners to say: "And forgive us our debts". This is for, what debts will still have the consummate ones once they have reached sons of the Heavenly Father? And the word: "And do not take us into temptation, but deliver us from the cunning one" has the same meaning with the words of Abba Makarius who said: "Have mercy on me and help me".

141. (V. 72) The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same, who asked him for a blessing and who asked him about dispassion.

[320] In the relation between him who prays and the one whom he prays for, it won't be active only him who prays but also the one whom he prays for. The one whom he prays for, that one will pray himself for him too, so that him who prays to be listened to. Of course, he prays for his interest. But for his prayer contributes to be listened to the one who prays for him, his prayer will benefit the one who prays to, by making that one listened to by God, by attracting God's attention upon him too. Both of then benefit out of this reciprocal prayer. This is a relationship that strengthens each one's love for another. This is a current starting from each of them and directed towards each of them. They prayer is directed towards God, but in the benefit of both of them. Both of they meet into God. This is the fullest meaning of the communion.

Brother, God know what is beneficial to us. You have asked for a bread from my helplessness and there didn't enter my cemetery more than the three breads appointed for a week. But behold that now, by the oikonomia of God, the son of my pains, he who is sweeter than honey, and who hasn't done ever anything by himself, and who has all people as of-one-soul with him and who reckons what is beneficial to them as beneficial to himself, he has come bringing a bread and I couldn't refuse it. This is for it is said: "It is useful to you to cut off your own will even in this". So, I have bracken that bread and I have sent some to your love too, while condemning myself as worthless for what I've done. This is for the Lord has done to you according to your faith. And may Him not condemn me[321]. But if the word about this has reached you and the two brother who are allowed to enter your monastic cell, you will be allowed to tell them about this.

As about dispassion, it is s gift from God and He bestows it whomsoever He wants. May God give you that hand that can touch the things you are stretching you hand towards, with fear and according to His will. Amen. Pray for me, brother.

142. (V. 73) The question of the same one addressed to the other Oldman: Father, why the king Oldman called his monastic cell as cemetery?

The answer from John: He called it so because it has rested him of all things. This is for he has consummately died to the sin. And this is also for his cell, which he has buried himself alive in, as in a tomb, for the name of Jesus, it is a place of resting where either the demon is his chieftain the devil, they do not even enter. This is for his monastic cell has become a holy place, for it is the dwelling place of God. Let's all extoll God as one heart, in everything.

[321] Barsanuphius reckons that that bread given him above his ration, it has come to him for the faith of him who followed to ask for it. He was an unworthy tool of this deed of God, fulfilled through him, for the faith of that one. And because he hasn't sent him the whole that bread, he prays not to be condemned for that. This is because it was the right of that one to receive the whole his bread.

143. (V. 74) The question of the same one towards the same Oldman: because it is written in the "Lives of the Father" (Hist. Laus. 20: 3), that one did one hundred prayers, another did a different number of prayers, do we owe too, when we pray, to have a measure, or not? And how must we do our prayers: prolonged? Or must we say "Our Father" and sit down to do our handwork? And when we work, what must we do? Also, what must do him who lives by himself regarding the vespers and the night religious services? And must him say the songs and the hymns?

The answer of John: The hours and the songs are churchly traditions and they are good for the together-speaking of the entire people; likewise, in monasteries, for the together-speaking of the multitude[322]. But they who live in Scetis[323] they do not have either the hours[324] or they sing hymns. But they do handwork and they mediate and they pray alone for a little while. And while you stand at prayer you must pray for being liberated of your former man, or you must say "Our Father", or you must do both of those and then after to stay and do your handwork. Regarding the prolongation of the prayer, when you stand up, if you pray incessantly, according to the Apostle (1 Thes. 5: 17), you must not start it again each time you are standing up. This is for your mind will be in prayer for the whole day. But when you sit down to do your handwork, you must say into your heart of to voice out some psalms. And at the end of each psalm, you must sit down and pray: "God, have mercy on me the sinner". And if you are harassed by thought you will add: "God, see my trouble, help me". Therefore, after you have accomplished knitting three rows to the net, you will stand up and pray. And by kneeling and by getting up, you will also say the mentioned prayer.

And at vespers, they who are in Scetis say twelve psalms and at the end of each psalm, instead of the doxology (Glory to the Father etc.), they say: Halleluiah, and then they utter a prayer. Likewise, at night they say twelve psalms, and after that they sit down and do their handwork. And as one wishes, one

[322] By singing together, there will take place a unity in word, a unity in thought and in feeling of the whole people from within church, like a symphony.
[323] It is about the wilderness of the Scetis from Egypt, that was full of hermits.
[324] The hours for common religious services.

can say psalm in his heart, while another examines his thoughts or reads "The Lived of the Fathers". The last one, after reading five of eight pages, he will start doing his handwork. And him who sing of says plasms in his heart, he could do that with his lips is there is nobody close to him, and if he doesn't' want anybody to know what he is doing.

144. (Only in Codex Coislin 124 and in the Georgian version of the Letters of Barsanuphius and John, that is in the Georgian handbooks from Sinai, no. 34 and 35. According to the French translation from Greek done my L. Regnault and Ph. Lemaire, and according to the translation from Georgian done by B. Outtier): *The same one, tormented by boredom, he asked the Great Oldman, insistently, to pray for him.*

The answer of Barsanuphius: I know that I am nothing. And if I don't take care of myself, I won't take care of you either. And this is for I also know that, according to the Scripture: "WE are limbs to one another" (Eph. 4: 25). And if I take care of myself for the fear of God, I will take care of you too[325]. This is for it was said: "Love your brother as yourself" (Lev. 19: 18). You must do the same. This is for it was also said: "A brother helped by his brother will be like a fortified stronghold, surrounded by walls" (prov. 19: 19). Before your love told me: "Pray for me", I had the commandment of Him Who says: "Pray for one another, in order you to get healed" (Jas. 5: 16)[326]. You must do the same. And if you suffer of boredom, remember the burden experienced by Abba Euthimios, but he still went with glory to

[325] There is a drowsiness that can make someone not taking care either of himself or of another. This is because either through egotism the man doesn't take care of his true life. The man takes true care of himself not only by doing that because of liking it, but also because he fears God. The man must not ruin his being given in his care by God. The man must elevate his being by making of himself as useful factor to others, but without bragging about that. We are intertwined with others in an impossible to be undone manner. When I take care of my true self, I take care of myself that helps you, that is developed by helping you. He who hates himself, he will hate others too, and vice versa. By that, the hater's being - as communion factor – will get withered. Only in the true communion there is present the water that waters the roots of the own being. Without the care for another, in the hatred towards another, you being itself will get emptied of meaning.

[326] You both will be healed of your egotism due to the communion between you. Through that both of you will be filled up with health and with true life.

our Lord[327]. You must wait for the day of your exit and you will be lightened of your boredom. He was our road companion and he went ahead of us. What a joy received him! Let's envy him[328]. Let's run to take the crown (1 Cor. 9: 24). I was written: "With the measure you measure, it will be measured to you" (Lk. 6: 38)[329]. And the Fathers say: "obedience for obedience" (Mios 1). That's why I too am telling you: Stretch you hand to the brother who is near you in trouble and you will find somebody to stretch his had to you on the moment of your trial[330]. And: "reproach, rebuke, urge" (2 Tim. 4: 2). This is for these too they bring forth spiritual fruits.

145. (Only in Codex Coislin 124). *The ask of the same one towards the other Oldman: I beg you, Abba, pray for me because I am weak in my soul and in my body, for God to give me consummate patience in this holy place. The enemy and my passions take shifts in disturbing my heart in order they to drag me backwards. And not for I have done something good here, but for the enemy sees me sheltered by the prayers of the Fathers. Have mercy on me, through Jesus, and incessantly pray for me the sinner.*

The answer of John: May God receive your ask as a good fragrance. This is for you have rejoiced my soul through your humbleness according to God Who doesn't make me less unimportant neither God diminishes your love. This is for the humbleness is the path of God and if we guard the humbleness, we will be saved in the name of our God. This is for, especially when we know the great strength of that power coming to unite itself with us, the power of our Master Jesus Christ Who has given us "the power to step on snakes, on scorpions, and o all enemy's power" (Lk. 10: 19).

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[327] The disgust, the boredom will burden you if you do not find your purpose in taking care of another, but not only regarding the passing life but especially regarding the eternal life. This means seeing your purpose in working for your and others' eternity in God. This is because without God there won't be open to you the path to eternity, and the worry for a passing life will end into a deadly boredom.

[328] Let's envy him in order us to do the good, at our turn.

[329] You give less, you will be given less; you give more, you will be given more.

[330] It is impossible you not to be seen by others when helping somebody. And that will determine somebody to help you too in your need. But through that one you will be helped by God.

When an enemy starts harassing somebody, that enemy pushed the harassed one to ask for the help of a judge in order to find his justice. He who has been hating the people since the beginning does likewise to us, by pushing us to run to our Chieftain and Emperor Christ. Thus, the war waged us by our enemy is rather beneficial to us than damaging. Where there Christ is present, the war from our enemy is powerless.

146. (V. 75) Question of the same one towards the same Oldman, about sleeping: For how long must he sleep and for how long must he take vigil; and how many clothes should be enough for him?

The answer of John: Regarding the night sleep, you must pray for two hours in the evening, counting them from sunset. After extolling God thus, you will sleep for six hours and then wake up for vigil. And you will spend the next four hours by taking vigil. Do the same in summer, but by shortening the time and by saying fewer psalms because of the nights during fewer hours.

Regarding the clothes, the weak one must have, because of his helplessness, winter clothes and summer clothes. And him who has reached to endure, as the Apostle says, the hunger and the thirst and the nakedness (2 Cor. 11: 2), he can spend his time by wearing a sole coat. But let's not get haughty in our thought, brother, but let's be driven towards the humble things (Rom. 12: 16). And let's not speak against while having two of three vestments.

147. (V. 76) The question of the same one towards the same Oldman: For you said, Father, that I must take vigil for six hours, how could I know if I took vigil for six hours?

The answer of John: If you want to find out the hours exactly, one day you will go to sleep in order you not to be defeated by your body's tiredness, and then take vigil from evening to morning, and count how many verses you will have said. And they, by dividing the verses on hours, you will find out the hours. Do the same in summer. And so, the hours will become known to you.

148. (V. 77) The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Father, pray for me for I am ill; and for I to be able to bear my illness joyfully. And tell my how must I wash up my stains.

The answer of Barsanuphius: All-beloved brother. I rejoice of your words for, even before I to do that, and even without understanding what I told you, you called yourself a sinner in your questions. And the sinner is, truly, a bad servant. And know you say that you are ill. But the illness is known as a rebuking towards correction. So, you ill ness has been sent to you as to a bad servant. But, if it is difficult to you to receive the rebuking, you will have to stop being bad. And if you are bad, you will accept the rebuking. And he who is not bad, he will be loved. And "The Lord rebukes him who He loves" (Prov. 3: 12; Hebr. 12: 6). Therefore, you must really take heed at how you are and you must choose one of the said things[331]. But God know that I, by not taking care of my own salvation, I find power to help you, for I fear the commandment.

Regarding the defilements, if you want to wash them away, you must wash them away with your tears. This is for the tears cleanly wash away all defilement. Shout out to Jesus until your throat becomes hoarse: "Master, save us for we are perishing: (Lk. 8: 24). Remove the ashes from upon your heart and light up the fire which the Lord came to throw on earth (Lk. 12: 49). And that fire will burn out all your stains and it will show the gold well imprinted within you and probed like in an oven[332]. One needs much watchfulness. Forgive me.

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[331] Enjoy your illness, either for it is for your correction, or for it is the proof of the love of God for you, so that God wanted to make you better. Only by enjoying your illness, your illness will be beneficial to you; in the first place by liberating yourself of sin through repentance, in the second case by advancing into repentance. But it is better not you reckon yourself as sinless.

[332] The fire of the love for God unites with the heart, and it will transform the heart in an oven unveiling the clean gold of the faith and of its kindness. But in fire there is also a suffering. That is the suffering for repenting of sin and of burning down the evil habits which become pleasant to the man, but they also defiled the man. The heart, through its feeling capable of maintaining the fire, it is like a hearth. Through it the whole man's being is like an oven which is cleaned up through fire.

149. (V. 78) The question of the same one addressed to the same Great Oldman: I beg you help me to find out where my body's drowsiness and my hearth' melting down came from? And why am I incapable of persevering in the same diet?

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, I am amazed and I wonder when the people living in the world, by wanting to gain and to wage wars, they despise the wild beasts, the traps of the thieves, the dangers of the sea, and the death itself, they do not get discouraged in their soul, due to the wanted richness, even when they are not sure about gaining it. And we, the wicked and the drowsy, who have received power to step over snakes and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy (Lk. 10: 19), and who have heard: "This I Me, do not fear" (Jn. 6: 20), and who limpidly know that we do not fight by our own power but out of the power of God Who strengthen us up and Who arms us up, we lack our courage and we get drowsy. Where does this come from? This comes from the fact that our bodies haven't been pricked by God's fear (Ps. 118: 120[333]), because the voice of our sigh hasn't even made us forget about eating our bread (Ps. 101: 5-6[334]). That's why we cross from a food regime to another, because of us not fully getting the fire which God has come to throw in on earth (Lk. 12: 49), a fire that would have burnt and consumed the brambles of our thought (intelligible) field. Our drowsiness, our carelessness, and our love for our body won't allow us to breath freely.

But our Lord is witness to me that I know a man, right in this blessed monastery – let nobody tall that I am speaking about myself, lest to reckon me as something while I am actually nothing – who can remain as he is, by eating nothing, by drinking nothing, by wearing not clothes until that day which God will visit him, namely he never needs those. This is for his food and his drink and his vestment is the word of the

[333] In KJB we have: Ps. 119: 120: "My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments."; in ROB we have: Prick my body with Your fear, for I feared Your judgments." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[334] In KJB we have: Ps. 102: 4-5: "My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread. // By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin."; in ROB we have: Ps. 101: 5-6: "Wounded is my heart and it has got withered like the grass; for I have forgotten to eat my bread. // by the voice of my sigh, my bone stuck to my flesh." (E. l. t.'s n.)

Holy Ghost[335]. Therefore, if you want to be zealous, you must strive yourself, you must fear God and God will fulfill your will. This is for He said that "He will do the will of those who fear Him" (Ps. 144: 19[336]). And I, even despite I am nothing, I put in work my power[337]. This is for it is characteristic to God to uphold, to strengthen, and to lead to all good things and to guard us against any evil thing, and to save us into His Kingdom. His to be the glory forever. Amen. Pray for me and pray the Oldman to unite himself with you in prayer.

150. (V. 79) The question of the same one towards the same Great Olman: I beg you tell me Father how can one gain the humble-cogitation, or the consummate prayer? Or what one should do in order him not to seem that he wanders with his thoughts? Must he read?

About the way which one can gain the humble cogitation in, our Lord taught us, saying: "Learn from Me that I am gentle and humble in heart and you will find resting to your souls" (Mt. 11: 29)[338]. If you want to gain the consummate resting find out what He endured and endure that you too, and cut off you will in everything. This is for Himself said that He didn't descend from heavens to make His will, "but the will of the My Father Who is in heavens" (Jn. 6: 38). Of this consists the humble-cogitation: enduring reproaches and condemnation and all the things suffered by our Teacher Jesus.

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[335] In the note to the Volos edition: "I reckon that the saint tells these about himself, even if he says, out of humbleness, that he tells those about another.

[336] In KJB we have: Ps. 145: 19: "He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them."; in ROB we have: "The will of them who fear Him He will do and their prayer He will hear and He will save them." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[337] It is being expressed here ethe mystery of the union between our will and the will of God. By working God within us as free and loving Person, He won't chock up our will, but He places Himself on the line of our will and he helps our will too to be fulfilled. Only the impersonal forces, or only one who wants to dominate you will hinder your will. He who loves you he will promote your freedom, he will encourage you, and he will help you to work yourself. This is for he rejoices for you answer him with your free love and by working the good things, which correspond to his will as well. And the good if the love for one another, or it is the product of this love.

[338] He who is humble in heart he will also have resting within his soul and he won't try to impose himself to others by all sorts of means, in order him to maintain an apparent superiority for himself. He is not tormented by the fear of not being noticed by others.

And te consummate prayer consists of speaking to God while non-wandering (with your thought), it consists of gathering together all your thoughts in a non-scattered manner, together with your senses. One is led to this by his will of dying to any of his fellow humans and to the wor4ld and to all the thing from within world[339]. And you ought to say God nothing but this: "Deliver me from the cunning one" (Mt. 6: 10) and "You will be dome" into me (Mt. 6: 10). You have you mind staying in front of God and talking to Him. And the true prayer is known when he who does it has been liberated from any wandering and he sees that his mind gets gladdened by being illuminated by God. And the sign that one has reached the consummate prayer it is that the man no longer gets disturbed even when tempted by the whole world. One will pray consummately if he has become dead to the world and to the resting which the world invited him to. And carefully doing you thing for the Lord, it is not scattering, but it is zeal towards God.

Regarding the reading, it is useful to read: "The Lives of the Saints", for thus the mind will get illuminated into the Lord.

151. (Only in Codex Coislin-Paris 124 and Coislin 281). The question of the same one towards the other Oldman: The Great Oldman said: "One lights up the consummate prayer by dying to the people, to the world, and to the bodily pleasures". What should I do to reach there once I am living among people? This is for I must give commands to my brother who serves me. On the other hand, because of being I ill, I cannot eat except green vegetables. But this makes me lust for other things as well. More than that, if the vegetables aren't well cooked, my thought will get disturbed by thinking as illness. This is for often that gives me a hard night. So, because of being I in these circumstances, how could I die to the people? On the other hand, if the food is good and prepared according to my illness,

[339] It is necessary the death towards people and towards the passing things, meaning the death of the will to use the people and the things egotistically and for bodily pleasures, in the sense of refusing to help people, and especially in refusing to know God through them. Namely, the thoughts about people and about things must be gathered in the thought at God and at serving God and for the salvation of the people by bringing them to God. One must gather everything is God for out of God are all the things and for all the things are being consummated in God. By thinking them in connection to God, the things will be cleaned up of any egotistic and passionate attraction, they are being sanctified.

it will give born within me to pleasure. How could I then die to the body's pleasure and to the world? Nd how must I spend the Holy Week? I pray you to teach me these and pray for me.

The answer of John: Oh, you who live among people and you want to die yourself to them, do not judge or despise anybody, and do not remain stuck to your own will. This means dying to the people while living among them[340]. If it happens that in the necessary relationships somebody upsets you, you must bear sweetly towards your neighbor who owes you something, by saying to himself: "God know that what is useful. Maybe God wanted him to do such in order I not to find any pleasure for anybody, but rather a sufferance". No longer get troubled because of lacking certain food, because that could happen to come from the work of the devils in order to disturb you. And if you use some sort of food because of your illness, you must thank God, and you must reckon yourself as unworthy of that and that will be useful to you. Always remember the advice: "Give thanks for everything" (1 Thes. 5: 18) and you will have rest[341]. This is for by doing so you will no longer be the slave of the annoyance for the lack of some sorts of food which taste pleasantly, but you will be defended by God through the mediation of the thanking you bring to Him. Regarding the Holy Week, you will eat, because of your helplessness, at 11 hours, a few vegetables and if you cannot cut off the wine, you will drink as much as you will reckon as

[340] This is a paradox. You are attached to people and to the world when you are attached to your own will egotistically. It seems to you that by doing so you are master over others and over things while you actually become their slave. Only by the generous rejection of the egotism which opens you to the people and to the mysteries of the world, you will have died to the people and to the world. By serving the true and eternal interests of the people, you will have died to the people, for you will have died to your will of using the people and the things egotistically. Bestow yourself to the people in order you to be able to die to the people, better said you to be able to die to your desire of taking advance of people. In this case you have died to the people and to the world in that what they have superficial, but you have discovered and you help the people in their imperishable deep. And in this deep too, the things have been illuminated to you. You have discovered an unmatched value into God. You really unite yourself with the people and with all things into God. You have resurrected for all people and for all thing into God.

[341] The discontent keeps your soul in a continuous unrest, disturbance, and agitation, which do not allow you to think at God and to meet God and to reckon that in God you have everything in each circumstance and in each gift of trouble. Your discontent separated you from Him Who manages and fill up all things. You discontent won't allow you to enjoy even that what you have. The people say rightly: "God takes the gift from the discontent one".

necessary, as for instance two cups. Do not be disquiet because of that, but do everything for the glory of God, as the Apostle says (1 Cor. 10: 34). Pray for me and forgive me with your love.

152. (V. 96) The question of the same one towards the same Oldman: How comes that I want to control my belly and to reach eating less food, but I cannot do that? And even if I eat fewer food for a short while, I will again come to the first quantity. It is likewise with the drink.

The answer of John: My brother, I beg your love to remember that you have told me all the passion I have too. This is for I suffer of the same ones. And nobody can deliver himself of those until he will have reached the measure of him who said: "I have forgotten to eat my bread; by the voice of my sigh my bone stuck to my flesh" (Ps. 101: 6[342]). One like this quickly comes to the fewness of the food and of the drink. This is for his tears become brad to him. And so, he reached to nourish himself with the Holy Ghost. Believe me, brother, that I know a man known only to the Lord, who has reached such a measure: once or twice a week, or even more often than that, he is conquered by the spiritual food and its sweetness makes him forget about the material food. And when he comes to eat, he feels fed of it and disgusted of it. And if he eats, he will Comden himself, by saying: why am I not always so? And he no longer wants to eat[343]. So, where are we at, brother? Won't us leave

[342] Vid supra. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[343] In the Volos Edition: "I reckon that the saint says those about himself, though he claims saying those about another. He does that for his humbleness. It is being affirmed here the unknown mystery of the intimate connection between soul and body. After all, the body is a plasticized and sensitized rationality, one full of the work of the human spirit and, actually, full of the godlike Ghost. Therefore, why wouldn't this godlike Ghost sustain the body as support of the spiritual life, by an intense work of the godlike Ghost within the human soul, and therefore within body too, without resorting to new adds of matter, which to be transformed by Him into the living and animated matter of the body? Besides these, the matter is, actually, a concentrated energy. It may be that we, by the power of our spirit, we are incapable of actualizing all the energy concentrated with our body. A more intense work of the godlike Ghost can actualize, by working directly upon our body, or through our spirit, more of the deposits of energy condensed within our body. These energies are more condensed in the body's bones. They sticking to the flesh can have as consequence the filling up of the flesh with more energy, so that the flesh will be able to live for a longer period of time without adding new food to it. This seems to be what Abba John is going to tell us further on. But this also can be the consequence of focusing all our thoughts in the sole

form here, won't we die? Forgive me, because while not finding my own things which I to brag myself with, I brag myself with foreign toils. And this is towards my condemnation.

153. (V. 97) The question of the same one towards the same Oldman: Please, Father, clarify me the meaning of the following thing: How can one reach the things said by you? This is because I do not know that. This is because each time I try to diminish my food, the drowsiness and the helplessness don't leave me until I fall again to the previous measure. And how can you say that him who has reached the measure of the one who said: "My bone stuck to my flesh" (Ps. 101: 6[344]), he will reach to be satisfied with little? And how before the diminishing of the food "the bone sticks to the flesh"?

The answer of John: Brother, I force myself to tell things which are above my measure and I fear to be condemned by describing foreign feats. It was written: "My bone stuck to my flesh" (Ps. 101: 6). This means that all the bones of the man become one; or all the man's thoughts become one thought according to God. This is for, by sticking that thought to the flesh, the flesh gets spiritualized by following to that thought that is according to God. And if the joy of the Ghost gets born within his heart, that joy nourished the soil and it fattens up the body and it strengthens both of them, so that they no longer will get drowsy and they no longer will get weakened. This is for, since now, Jesus makes Himself Mediator and He brings the man close to the gates of the place "where the pain and the sadness and the sigh have run away from" (Isa. 51: 11). And to this man it will be fulfilled the word saying: "Where your treasure is, there will be your heart too" (Mt. 6: 21). But that one that brings the man to his measure it is the consummate humbleness into Christ Jesus our Lord. To Whom it is due the glory forever. Amen.

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thought directed towards God, and that would attract in thus concentrated thought, but also in the unified and stuck to the body bones, the power of the Holy Ghost which actualizes more energy concentrated in them.

[344] Vid supra. (E. l. t.'s n.)

154. (V. 98) The question of the same one addressed to the Great Oldman: I beg you, tell me how can one reach the restraint? And how can be discerned between the natural illness and that illness coming from the devils? And how much must one eat?

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, you aspire, little by little, to get to know hidden things. And I, because I am insane, I still reckon that what you ask for knowing from me it cannot be known except by him who has reached that measure. Actually, the living man feel the coldness and the warmth of the things he touches. But the dead no longer feels these because he has lost his touching. And as only him reaches the knowledge of the things who has come closer to those things, and he who doesn't come closer to them and who it not in touch with those things, even if he asks and hears for thousands of times about them, he won't be able to catch their meanings, likewise it is in this case: no matter how much one speaks to somebody about these, the hearer need to try those things (experience). Regarding the illness, if the body received food on a daily basis but it still gets weakened, that illness is from the evils. If not, that is a natural illness. And restraining oneself consists of getting up from the table a little before getting satiated, as the beginner Fathers ruled out (Abba Isaiah, Recueil 4: 44; Abbaye de Bellefontaine, 1970, p. 61). But when the man reached the measure of him who said: "His thoughts are not unknown to us" (2 Cor. 2: 11), he won't be able anymore to forget how much he must eat, for he has got accustomed to that.

Behold, I am forced to unnecessarily tell you things which are above me. And it might be there anybody who can receive and understand those, except very rarely. May the God of our Fathers to bring you to that joy. This is for in this joy there is untold light. This is for that light it shines far and it is sweet. That's why he doesn't remember about food, but he looks at the things from above, and he perseveres in cogitating the things from above, there where Christ sits on the right hand of the Father. Him to be the glory forever. Amen.

155. (V. 81) The question of the same one towards the other Oldman, asking clarification about the measure of the restraint.

The answer of John: The Fathers say about the measure of the restraint that it consists of stopping yourself from eating a little before getting satiated, either from food or from drink, namely before having your stomach full. And it consists also in using the food and the wine sapiently. One doesn't drink much in winter[345]. Also, one must eat less. And not only of this it consists the measure of the restraint, but also in speaking and in sleeping and in clothing and in restraining your senses. In all of these it is shown the measure of the restraint.

156. (V. 82) The question of the same one towards the same Oldman: Tell me, Father, what it consists of this "less" in food, in drink, in vegetables, and in fruits?

The answer of John: Of all the wight of the bread, of the food, of the vegetables, and of the fruits, you will diminish down to an ounce (the twelfth part). And regarding the wine and the water you will drink a half of cup of each. And if you are strong and if you do not get tired, it will be good you to drink only once a day. And if you cannot do that, you will rink twice a day, but on each time you will drink less. And during the movements and during the wars from your thoughts, you must cut off a little from the usual measure, namely approximately an ounce of food and a half of cup of drink, so that youd food will be diminished by two ounces a day, and you drink will be diminished by a cup a day. Pray, brother, for me.

157. (V. 83) The question of the same one towards the same Oldman: How can one know how much must he eat and drink?

[345] In the Volos Editon: "It might be that the preposition *no* it is temporal, and not negative. Namely during winter, when one drinks much wine, he who restraints himself mush drink less than his usual measure".

The answer of John: One can find out by examining on each day how much your body needs of bread, of foods, of vegetables, and of fruits, or how much food and drink. For instance, one drinks tree cups a day and he eats a quarter of kilogram piece of bread. If he sees that his body asks for more than three cups without a specific reason, or without too strong physical efforts, or because he ate salty foods, he must fight to restraint himself. But if there is a clear reason, that won't be a temptation. And out of three cups, if he can let him cut off a cup and a half. And out of a quarter of kilogram food, let him cut off an ounce.

158. (V. 84) The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: We beg you to tell us what God asks according to the man's power, so that the man not to mix, because of his drowsiness, something from himself, and so the man to think that he does everything he can. How must we, therefore, understand what we can?

The answer of Barsanuphius: God have given the man understanding so that the man can discern among things. If somebody, because of being tired by travelling, or by other heavy works, he cannot keep the same measure as on the other days, but he looses, a little his, bodily ascesis, namely to his daily half of a quarter of kilogram of bread he usually eats, he adds one more ounce for compensating his physical efforts, he will do that out of his power by eating a little more. Or, if by waking himself up at midnight in order to take vigil, he rests himself another half of an hour because he is tired, he will do that again out of his power. So, being tired it is a sign that one can rest himself for a little longer. But then he must wake up and take his usual vigil. So, doing that what is in somebody's power means diminishing a little one's food or sleep. The Fathers appointed for sleeping a half of the night. And they ruled than one must stop eating each time he sees himself wanting a little more.

159. (V. 85 a) The question of the same one towards the other Oldman: What quantity of wine and of cooked food it is

good to be kept daily by him who lives by himself? And how could the Fathers keep a very harsh diet?

The answer of John: Regarding the wine, to him who is healthy and who wants to restrain himself it will suffice a cup a day and nothing more than that. And if often weaknesses come upon him, let him drink two cups. And he must take only a plate of cooked food and then no longer take care of it. And to the question about how could the Fathers keep such a harsh diet, one must know that they have their bodies very obedient. So, they who govern themselves well and with right-reckoning, they will take in account the body and its tendency. Pray for me.

160. (V. 85 b) The question of the same one towards the same Oldman: The canon of the restrain set up by you must be kept by everybody or that is according to the state of the one who asks about it?

The answer of John: Brother, the things told my me to your love about restraint, those things have been told to those who are like us and according to our measure. If we do the things from the middle, by restraint we will reach the higher things. But by putting our foot on the first step of the ladder, we must not want to immediately climb to the higher step. This is for they who have reached that measure can be, as the Apostle said, both "hungry and satiated for they have been accustomed themselves to all things" (Phil. 4: 12)[346]. And you, brother, you know your measures. If there is stirred up a war within you, you will take off one more ounce. And do the same with your drink[347].

[346] They maintain their self-control either they are hungry or they are satiated, for they have become accustomed to control themselves in both cases.

[347] If your greediness wages war to you, or if your body starts having others lusts too because of being too well feed, you will cut off another ounce.

161. (V. 86) The same brother asked the same Oldman: What does it mean eating according to lust or according to tendency?

The answer of John: Eating according to lust means lusting to eat not for the need of your body but because of the covetousness of your belly. And when you see that somebody desires more green vegetables than dry vegetables, because he tends to that, but not because he lusts for those, but for it is easier to him, that is something different. There are tendencies which receive more gladly the sweet foods, others the salty foods, and others the sour foods. And that isn't passion or lust of covetousness. But lusting for and desiring the food it is lust. And the lust is the servant of the belly's covetousness. So, if you work against your lust and you use the food only as necessary, you won't do that because of your belly's covetousness.

162. (V. 87) The question of the same one towards the same one: Why should I do, Father, when the passion doesn't occur before by it snakes in during eating? Must I stop myself from eating?

The answer of John: Do not stop, but fight against that thought, by remembering that the food becomes something stinky and we will be judges like ones who ate, while other restrained themselves consummately. And if the lust has stopped, you will continue eating, but you will condemn yourself. And if the lust persists, you will call the name of God to your help and He will rest you (from temptation). And if your lust takes you under control so that you can no longer eat orderly, you will top eating. And if there are somebody sitting to the same table with you, in order they not to notice your action, you will continue eating small pieces[348]. But, as I said, you must not stop eating immediately because of your belly's covetousness, but guard yourself not to rush to eat disorderly. Speaking about the belly's covetousness, the Fathers asked us

[348] One must notice that the humbleness and the gentleness which must accompany the ascesis. He who practices the ascesis must not brag with it by showing it, neither must him rebuke other with his own example. Let him restrain himself for God and not for people, namely let him be as discrete as possible.

not to stretch out our hand to take food before somebody else (Isaiah, Recueil, 3, 11, p. 50) because of being that an indecent thing and stranger to the good order. And when the food put in front of you is of such kind that it is not divided in individual portions, but all eat in common from the same plate, it is not inappropriate somebody to take out of together with everybody. But he must do that in good order, and not to fall into his belly's covetousness and into damnation. Another sign of the belly's covetousness is that of wanting to eat before the established hour, and one must not do that except if there is a blesses cause. But one must for the held from God in everything and God will help us.

164. (V. 89) The question of the same one towards the same one: Where does it come from the impulse of the body?

The answer of John: The impulse of the body comes out of carelessness. This is for the carelessness drive you unnoticedly, to judge and to condemn. And thus, it will betray you. When Israel truly served God, God guarded Israel of their enemies. But when Israel didn't take care of truly serving God, God allowed Israel's enemies to attack them.

165. (V. 90) The question of the same one towards the same one: Must one ask the Fathers about all their thoughts occurring in their heart? And him who prays and who sings psalms must him do that with a loud voice? Must one remember all the things he did, heard, and spoke? Must one compete with the Fathers?

The answer of John: Brother, one must not ask about all the thoughts occurring to him. This is because some thoughts are passing. One must ask only about those thoughts which persevere and wage war to the man. This is because, as a man who is rebuked by many, he will despise the reproaches and he won't take care of those, but if somebody pick him and starts waging war to him, he will complain to the judge, it is similarly with this thing too. And the prayer and the singing of psalms must be done not only with the mind, but also with the lips. This is for Prophet David says: "Lord, You will open my lips and

my mouth will herald Your glory" (Ps. 50: 16[349]). And the Apostle showed that it is required the work of the lips too, so that he spoke about "the fruit of the lips" (Hebr. 13: 15). Regarding the things seen by you and heard by you and did by you and thought by you, nothing cuts those off more than the prayer done in humbleness, with tiredness and with tears, that which is not only out of the man's will. And the Fathers who were victorious, they didn't win without toils and tear and cutting off of their will.

And competing with the Fathers means self-appreciation and reckoning yourself their equal. But he who asks and who trusts the answer he received from the Father, he will show humbleness and progress into the Lord. Pray for me, brother.

166. (V. 91) Another from among fathers asked the same Oldman: How can one guard his heart? And how the war wages by our enemy starts? And if one must resist him who wages him war? And about the thought of the fornication: must one close its entrance? And if it has entered, what one should do? And regarding the food, must one establish the ounce by using a scale, or to appreciate it by eye and by being careful?

The answer of John: Guarding one's mind means having his mind awake and clean when he is warred. This is for the first one sliding into careless it is his thought. And if the enemy sees his carelessness the enemy will strive to bring the war within him. And if you want to find out if a thought is enemy or friend, stop praying and ask that thought of your: are you ours of are you form the enemy? And that thought will tell you the truth. So, the surrender comes out of carelessness[350]. But you

[349] In KJB we have: Ps. 51: 15: "O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.;"; in ROB we have: Ps. 50: 16: "Lord You will open my lips and my mouth will herald Your praise." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[350] One could say that the heart is the feeling of the deep had by man within himself. As such, the heart is, on one hand, feeling, and on the other hand the heart is a noticing of that deep that is infinite within man, a deep that crosses beyond the man, into infinite. Through his heart the man ties himself – not by theoretical knowledge but really – both sensitively and reflexively to God, like the man ties himself through his bodily senses to the outside world, or like he lives through feeling the states of his body.

And that deep felt and noticed by man's heart it is not an impersonal infinite, but it is Person, because otherwise the heart won't feel so much in love with this deep, and so happy

should not resist it, because this is what your enemy want and they won't cease (to wage war to you). But you must run to God against them, by throwing your helplessness to God. And GO not only will be able to chase them away from you, but even to take away their power of working[351].

Regarding the devil of the fornication, it is very good to lock up its entrance. But if it kidnaps you and enters, you will fight it and you will throw your helplessness in front of God and you will ask for help. And God will take that devil away from you.

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for noticing and feeling Him. That deep that wakes up the love of the human person feeling that deep in his heart, it is Person at its turn. Through his heart the man also feels the indefinite of his fellow human, with love or with enmity, so that in this too it is shown that the felt and feeling human indefinite is person. If the mind is tightly united with the heart (as in the *Prayer of the Heart*) in highlights on the knowledge plan the noticing of God through man's heart. Therefore, in the expression the man gives it by words, there is comprised not only the godlike deep, but there is comprise also God's indefinite as Person, an indefinite lived through feeling. But, as the mind as knowledge function gets separated from the heart, it will be less able to notice through feeling the Person-like indefinite of God, and the knowledge function it takes over by rationality that, by its definite knowledge, it is rathe destined to know the finite things. This rational knowledge, by noticing the bordered and opposed aspects, it makes they who have it to obey to one another, sometimes fanatically. Only in the feeling knowledge taking place through heart, and only through the mind united with the heart, the people can unite themselves, for all of them notice the infinite, person-like, and loving whole.

At its turn, a heart left by rationality it will lose its knowledge function of feeling the indefinite deep, and the consequence is that that heart gets fanaticized by only feeling the love and the hatred for bordered things. By being covered as the noticing function of a person-like infinite that ignites the love, that heart can become callous to that what is great and good and all-comprising, and that heart can fall into perishing and narrow phantasms for bordered things. To that state is taken by the heart the thought passionate for finite things which promise some superficial and passing pleasures. But the prayer puts again the heart in connection to God, int heart's true function, and the heart finds in God the generous love for all things.

[351] By submitting yourself to their temptation, you will remain on the plan of the finite thoughts, of stirring up for them. Only by running to God you will elevate your heart above the plan of those thoughts and you will place you heart in communion with the infinite and loving deep of God. But only if God too comes to meet you, with His infinity, he will help you to detach yourself form on the plan of the finite things which promise you the finite satisfactions of a divisive egotism. God will thus get you far from the finite things, far from the divisive egotism of the demons and of the passionate thought brought by them in your conscience and God will take away their power they had upon you. Even the waken up conscience of your helplessness will open you to God's infiniteness, for you place your helplessness in comparison to His infinite power, and you even live this difference between them, you live both of them simultaneously without they being separated, and your conscience will get humbled by the momentum of God's comprising love.

Regarding the food, you must appoint to yourself that what maintains your life, with the balance of the reckoning and with guarding. And pray for me with love.

167. (V. 92) The question of the same one towards the same one: Where does it come to me from, the burdening of my heart and the oversleeping? And the fact that there is no repentance within me?

The answer of John: "These ones always come to him who appeases himself (to the recluse hesychast) in order to discourage him and him to run away from stadium (from the battle place) and him to get despaired. But let's throw our helplessness before Him Who can do much more than we ask Him to do, or than we thing (Eph. 3: 20), until Him will crush the camps of the Amorites before us. This is for God won't allow Madian and Amalec and the sons of the sunrises to destroy our fruits (Jud. 6: 3-4). Let's wait for the help from our Master God, for He is stronger than they are. And He will save us.

168. (V. 93) The question of the same one addressed to the same one: How comes that during night some face shine to me, and during the say I fight other faces? But this takes place even without faces. And it also happens that these hallucinations are sometimes accompanied by sweetness and sometimes not.

The answer of John: They who attack us during the say, the same ones attack us at night too, in order to show us that they still have us in their hands and they transform themselves in other and other faces. And the fact that this takes place here with sweetness and there without sweetness it comes, as I said, out of their transformation, in order they to throw the man in doubt and disturbance. And the night war is twofold. Sometimes it is suffered because of pleasures, some other times it is because of the devil's temptation, in order the devil to bring somebody to desperation, so that that one no longer believes that he could be saved. So, when the temptation of this war comes to you, you will do seven times seven kneelings, namely forty-nine kneelings, and each time you will say: "Lord, forgive me, for Your holy name!". And if you are ill, or if it is Sunday

when the kneelings (the prostrations) are forbidden, you will say this word for forty-nine times instead of the kneelings. And the difference among temptations is this: some of them are from the devils and they come out of pride; others are from pleasures and they come out of the covetousness of the belly[352].

169. (V. 95) The question of the same one towards the same one: You told me, Father, in your answer, that among the things happening to the man during the night, some of them come because of our pride by the temptation of the devil, and others come out of pleasures because of our belly's covetousness. Can the devil stir up these temptations within man only because of his envy, without being there the pride and the love for pleasures? And how can one know when such a movement is stirred up within him during night by nature? And do the consummate ones too experience this natural movement? And must one kneel between Easter and Pentecost, or not?

The answer of John: The devil can stir that up out of his envy. But if there isn't the pride or the lust for pleasure, the evil cannot do that. Like one who wants to build up a house but he doesn't have the necessary materials so he will toil vainly, likewise will be the case of the devil. And one can know the sign of the natural movement when seeing that that movement isn't stirred up within himself either by pride, or by pleasure, either by the devil's envy. Especially when that movement isn't from the devil's envy, but it is a natural movement, one will know that when, after falling asleep in peace and after many prayers and after sealing on himself with the name of the Holy and of-One-being Trinity, he still experiences that movement. But the consummate one no longer experience either that, for they quenched even the need of their nature, and they have spiritually made on themselves, by doing that, eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heavens (Mt. 19: 12), namely they have killed (modified) their limbs (Col. 3: 5). And about kneeling between

[352] When we imagine persons whom we strife with, we are dealing with the temptation brought by the devil, because of our pride, or because of our ambitions, because we remember some offenses brought to us. When we imagine persons stirring up within us our lust to debauchery, which in its drunkenness forgives about everything, we deal with some movements stirred up within us by good-gorging intertwined with our egotism. The temptations of pleasure come to us at night, while the anger tempts us during the day.

Easter and Pentecost, it was said on some other time not to kneel inside your monastic cell[353]. Pray for me, brother.

170. (V. 94) The question of the same one towards the same one: If it happens to me some hallucination at night and on the next day I was to take the Holy Impartation, what should I do?

The answer of John: Let's get closer as some wounded ones, and not as some victorious ones; as ones who need the doctor. And He Who healed that woman who suffered of bloodshed (Mt. 9: 22), He will heal us. Let's love much, so that us to be told too: "Many sins will be forgiven to you for you have been loving much" (Lk. 7: 47). Each time you want to be imparted, you must say: "Not to be me, Master, these Holy Mysteries towards judgment, or towards damnation, but towards the sanctification of the soul and of the body". Then you will come closer, fearfully, and our loving-of-people Master will do with us His mercy/ Amen.

171. (V. 99) The question of the same one towards the same Oldman: Abba, would that be good if a confessed to someone among my brothers the hallucinations I had, and to ask him, after prostrating myself in front of him, to pray for me?

The answer of John: It is good to be told him who can hear (who can understand) about the hallucinations had during night, but not to the younger ones. And he who confesses must prostrate before him whom he confesses and to ask to pray for him. This is for there is a word of the Scripture: "Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, in order you to get healed" (Jas. 5: 16).

[353] In the Volos Edition, at note: "To be seen the interpretation given by the First Ecumenical Synod in which the Holy Triodon, and all the other interpreters (and also Basil the Great in the canon no. 51) they forbid the kneeling between Easter and Pentecost. That's why, also this partial permission of the saint wants to agree the general interdiction from the canon of the Ecumenical Synod and of the Church. By reconciling both of them, if some ones are bothered by the war of their body, or if they have some penance and they want to persecute their body in order to appease it, let them do more bowings down so that by doing those they to fulfill the tiredness of their knees and of the prostration to the ground."

Scholium: By telling the Father that it is good to confess to him who can hear the confession, he showed that it is not useful to confess to anybody, haphazardly.

172. (V. 100) One of the Fathers who live in quietude (lives isolated in his monastic cell), asked the same Oldman: How must he sit in his monastic cell?

The answer of John: Sitting inside the monastic cell means remembering your sins and crying and weeping for them; and taking vigil not to allow your mind to be enslaved; and if you mind is enslaved, you will bring you mind back in its place[354].

173. (V. 124) The question of the same one towards the same Oldman: How could I now, Father, when I am locked up within my monastic cell, if I cut off my will? The same question, when I am with people? And what the bodily will is? And what the devils' will is when covered up under the masque of the good? And, What God's will be?

The answer of John: Cutting off your will while you are sitting into your monastic cell means despising the bodily pleasure in everything. And the will of the body consists of thanking to the body in everything; so, in order not to satisfy your body, cut off your will while sitting inside your monastic cell.

And cutting off your will when you are with the people consists of dying towards them and of being with them as you would not be there[355].

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[354] You are required not to allow your mind to be taken away from under you control by some thoughts. This is because if that happens to you, you will no longer be totally free, once a part of you, namely your mind, it is take away from under your control. Bringing the mind in its guarding place in front of God means brining your mind like a soldier who guards in front of the Emperor. Then you are master over you mind and over yourself. Then are overpoured within you His gifts and His life and His generous love that is opposed to the passionate egotism.

[355] Do not be passionate of being with the people. Do not search for a pleasure when being with the people so that you will suffer when not being together with them. Wanting too exclusively to be with a certain person of with certain persons it is also an egotism.

That will according to God, according to the Apostle, it consists of cutting of your body's will (Eph. 2: 3). And the will from the devils consists of defending your justice and trusting in yourself[356]. Then you will be caught into the trap. Pray for me, my brother, and forgive me.

174. (V. 125) Question of the same one towards the same Oldman: What food must I allot to myself on each day?

The answer of John: Establishing your food for each day on the monastic cell, as you asked me, it means allowing yourself to be caught by a worry and by a need. Let yourself be guided by God's guidance. "He who walks straight, he walks trustfully" (Prov. 10: 10).

175. (V. 126) The question of the same one towards the same Oldman: Is it good to persevere into the prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me"? Or is it better reading from the Holy Scripture and uttering verses from the psalms?

The answer of John: There must be done both of them, a little from one and a little from another. This is for it is written: "This you must do and that you must not let aside" (Mt. 23: 330.

176. (V. 127) The question of the same one towards the same one: When I sing psalms, must I say "Our Father" after each of the psalms, or only for once and then to spend the left time in asks?

The answer of John: Saying "Our Father" once and uttering asks once, it is the same thing.

[356] That will that is coming to you from the devils, or which the devils made you reckoning it as your own will, it is the will to justify yourself in everything you do and to reckon that you cannot be wrong. It is the praise for own sins. You have rented your zeal to the demon. It is the proof of the egotistic pride defending its egotism.

177. (V. 101) The question of the same one towards the same one: It comes to me the thought that the cogitation (meditation) makes the prayer clean. Is it so?

The answer of John: Brother, do not allow the devils to mock you so that you to tell that the cogitation makes the prayer clean. This is because: hos could stay the passions within that man that has a clean prayer?[357]

178. (V. 128) The question of the same one towards the same one: Must we remember, at the end of the evening doxology or of the night doxology: the holy Churches, the Emperor, the leaders, the people, the poor, the widows, and the things alike? And he who is asked to pray for somebody, must he do that even if he is mastered by passions?

The answer of John: It is good to ask in prayer for the peace of the holy Churches and to remember the things following to that. But let's not do that as some worthless ones, who have no power towards that. This is for it is an apostolic commandment (1 Tim. 2: 1-2). And it is good us to pray for him who asks us to do so. This is for there is a word of the Gospel and of the Apostle: "Whomsoever asks for, you will give" (Mt. 5: 42); and: "Pray for one another so that you will be healed" (Jas. 5: 16). And again: "That what you want the people to do to you, you do the same to them" (Mt. 7: 12; Lk. 6: 31). And some people even prayed for the Apostles (Acts 12" 5). So, he who disregards the commandment, he will condemn himself. Behold why, being able or not, I am forcing myself towards this due to the commandment.

179. (V. 102) The question of the same one towards the same one: How reaches the thought to be prey to the wild beast?

The answer of John: The though will reach to be prey to the beast if the man does not take ahead of it and if the man doesn't despise on himself. Then the man suffers the bite of the

[357] This is not a clean prayer, because of still remaining the passion within him who does it. You still remain partially locked up into egotism.

beast's teeth and he will be torn apart by its teeth[358]. Later non, the man will need a bandage, namely repentance.

180. (V. 103) The question of the same one towards the same one: Must one close his eyes when facing the plots from the enemy? And when my body uprises, what will I do?

The answer of John: The devil shows to the man diverse things either through senses or outside senses. The weak one closes his eyes in order not to see those things. And the strong one, even if he sees those things, he will despise them. This is for "the righteous dares like a lion" (Prov. 28: 1). Regarding the uprising of your body, you must run on such moments to Jesus, through prayer, and you will find rest.

181. (V. 104) The question of the same one towards the same one: Why it happens to me to condemn others immediately after I have asked?

The answer of John: You endure the temptation of condemning others immediately after you have asked them about something because of not being dead within you're the temptation of reckoning yourself just (of justifying yourself). And you make no effort to shun yourself from this passion. Condemn yourself and the condemnation will go away from you.

182. (V. 105) The same one because of being upset by thieves and by getting very scared, but by the grace of God being him defended from being harmed, he confesses his fear to the same Oldman, and he also asked for the Oldman's prayer so that him to be defended in advance.

The answer of John: God doesn't leave anyone, for He said: "I won't leave you, neither I will forsake you" (Hebr. 13: 5). But God surrenders us to our faithlessness. But by the permission of God there come also the temptations to them who

[358] Here is being developed the theme of Mark the Ascetic, from his writing *About Baptism*, given in *The Romanian Philokalia*, vol. I. p. 282.

have consummate trust in God. But, are there more coming thieves than were the chariots and the power of Pharaoh? And it is known that by a sole word and at a sole sign of the Lord all of those were drown (Exod. 14: 26-28). Don't you remember how those coming upon Elisha got blind? And who made them blind and why (4 Kings[359] 6: 18)? He Who knows how to deliver the right-believers from temptations, He did and does all things. How could we forget about the Scripture that says: "The Lord will defend you against all evil; the Lord will guard you're your soul" (Ps. 120: 7[360])? And who will we forget the word: "To you even the hairs of you head are counted", or the word: "No sparrow with fall into snare without your Father knowing it. Isn't the man more valuable than a sparrow" (Mt. 10: 29-31)? Oh, you fear, the daughter of the faithlessness, how deep you have lowered us! It is dreadful. It blinds the mind up. It weakens the heart. It parts the people from God. It is the sister of the hopelessness. If herds the people from the fear of God to the land of the perdition. Brother, let's run away from fear and let's wake Him up from sleep, saying: "Master, save us for we are perishing" (Lk. 8: 24; Mt. 8: 25). And He, by waking Himself up, He will rebuke the rushing in of the wind and He will appease it. And He will tell us: "It is Me, do not fear" (Mt. 14: 29). Let's forsake the reed staff and let's take the staff of the cross, which they who limp lean on, which the dead are rise through, which the Apostle is bragging with (Gal. 7: 19), and which we have been delivered by, by surrendering ourselves and by placing ourselves next to Him Who has been crucified for us. This is for through Him He shepherds us too, for we are His sheep, and through Him He chases away from us the lusting for blood wolves[361]. Him to be the glory forever. Amen.

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[359] In KJB we are 2 Kings. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[360] In KJB we have: Ps. 121: 7: "The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul."; in ROB we have: Ps. 120: 7: "The Lord will guard you against all evil; He will guard you soul." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[361] The cross is our power for exceeding ourselves; the cross is the power prepared by Christ for us. Christ endured the cross like man in order to strengthen the human nature from within Him against the egotistic sparing, and in order Him to communicate us too that power. The remembrance of the cross connected to the cross's sign brings also Christ Himself within us, Christ Who strengthened His human nature by enduring the cross and, consequently to that strengthening His human nature defeated the dead. God couldn't have resurrected with a weakened human nature by dressing it up in the wide imperishable life, that which represents a supreme strength, as on an object. The human nature itself had to come to meet its

183. (V. 106) Askes about the same thing, the Great Oldman said: My sleepy brother, examine your drowsy heart, which I wonder about because it fears the servants who stay outside and it doesn't look at the masters who are inside. The thieves known with the senses are the servants of the thieves known with the mind, namely of the devils who work within them. You owe to thank to the thieves coming upon you, for by coming them they woke up their masters, namely the thieves sleeping within you. What distance put Jesus between Him and you so that you must travel that distance in order to go to Him and beg Him for helping you? Doesn't your ear hear what your mouth sings from psalms[362]? "Close is the Lord to them who call Him into truth. He will do the will of them who fear Him, and he will listen to their asks, and He will save them" (Ps. 144: 18-19[363]). Stick yourself with Him and He will banish away from you both the masters from within you and the slaves from outside you. Him to be the glory forever. Amen.

184. (V. 107) The same one asked the other Oldman: Two are the thoughts upsetting me relatedly to the thieves. One thought condemns me, saying: "The things you have belong to the

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resurrection, as an act of this spiritual strength, by enduring the pains opposed to the egotism. The cross is the proof of Christ's mercy on us, and it is also the means Christ bestowed to us, in order us to get strengthened and to grow up towards the strength of that generous life that is not submitted to the egotistic narrowing. In cross we have Christ with His all-loving power, but in order us too to impropriate this power. That's why the cross if our strong staff, it is our praise, and it is our hope. Through cross we banish away the devils who submit us when we are fearful because of our egotism. Through cross we are guarded on the broad pasture of the immortal food brought us by Christ. The devil wants us to be fearful, us to surrender ourselves to him, and us to become his servants; Christ wants us to become powerful, free, His brothers, and brothers of everybody, and partakers to the power of His generosity and to His glory. The devils enslave us because themselves they are not free, because of being they the weak slaves of the passions of their pride and they by working under their pride's mastery. In this sense of absolutely free of any passion and law which would be above Him, and which could limit Him, we must understand the affirmation of the Fathers that God is dispassionate (απαθής).

[362] The ear of Christ is so close to your mouth, as your own ear is.

[363] In KJB we have: Ps. 145: 18-19: "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. // He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them."; in ROB we have: Ps. 144: 18-19: "Close is the Lord to them who call Him, to all of them who call Him into truth. // The will of them who fear Him He will do and their prayer He will hear and He will save them." (E. l. t.'s n.)

monastery and you will commit sin if you allow the thieves to take these things away; that why you must beat the semantron and to shout out". The other thought condemns me, saying: "The Lord said: Him who wants to take away your coat, let him take away from you your shirt too". What do you command me master, to do? This is because I hesitate. And forgive me because by letting the thieves known with the mind to enter and to get out and to rob away my heart, I am asking about those thieves known with the senses. Therefore, I beg you pray for the Lord to firstly banish these ones away.

The answer of John: If you have nothing of your own, do not despise the things which you have received, with love, from the monastery. Thus, you won't be condemned. This is for the man who is under mastery he won't be under commandment (to allow anybody to take something away from him). That's why you will beat the semantron[364] without worrying yourself[365]. And you must shout out, saying: "Bless You Who still are[366], and help me". And God will defend you. The Lord will banish away both the thieves seen with the senses and those thieves known with the mind. Encourage yourself and be strong. And pray for me.

185. (V. 108) The same one read in Paterikon (Les sentences des Pères du désert. Solesmes, 1966, no. 325, p. 332) that him who truly wants to be saved, he firstly must suffer from people: reproaches, dishonor, losses, harms, and to set his own senses free[367], and then he will be able to climb at the

[364] In the Volos Edition: "Beating doesn't mean here beating the thieves up, but it means knocking on something and making noise, in order to scare away the thieves". (We have already added the *semantron* in the actual text, so that the things to be clearer (E. l. t.'s n.))

[365] You are not here under the commandment to keep your silence, because of not belonging those things to you so that you must defend them.

[366] In the Volos Edition: "I think that saying *still* he means the companion who still was with him. It is like he would say: "You brother who are with me, you too bless and come to help me", so that the thieves would hear that there is one more brother with him and they will be afraid and they will run away.

[367] The senses are unwillingly kidnapped by the pleasant things. By that their subject himself will be kidnapped and narrowed. The senses must be set free in order the man himself to become free. And this requires much strength. And this is a non-valuing of the material things.

consummate quietude[368]*, as Lord Jesus Christ did too, for by enduring Him all of these, He then came to the holy cross, that is one with killing the body and the passions, and that is one with the holy and consummate resting*[369] *(Abee Isaie, Recueil, quote 8: 68, p. 104; 13: 2-3, p. 115-119). And he said to himself: I the wicked haven't done any of these, but by offending everybody with my helplessness, I left from among people. I wonder if I must go again among people and by the help of God to do what the Fathers said and so I could enter the quietude (the withdrawal), so that my toils not to be in vain? And he confessed these to the same Oldman.*

The answer of John: The Fathers said right; and it is impossible otherwise. But that is because there are many reasons which the man thinks for that he does the good. But due to other reasons, the man will harm himself by doing so, and therefore he must firstly to convince himself that that what he does it is good. You have passed to the withdrawn living, but when you meet people, the vain glory is born within you. And maybe neither this thought that has come to you about living among people, it won't persist within you. And thus, there will be born two evils. But if you condemn yourself as one who haven't done that what you ought to in order you to climb on the cross, by saying: I have withdrawn myself because of my nescience, this self-condemnation by bringing reproaches and

[368] The quietude is one with the freedom, with the self-mastery. Such a man can gather and keep, entirely and continuously, his thought at God.

[369] We have here the understanding the cross as man's resting. The total victory upon passions and upon worries will bring with itself the consummate resting. But one can defeat his passions by suffering the separation from his passion and from their egotism. At Jesus there is not a defeating of passions but of His affects and weaknesses which entered our nature concomitantly to the sin. He took our affects but He didn't take the passions which are developed by satisfying the affects, which have within them the urge to be satisfied in an exaggerated manner, or to defend the man's earthly life at all costs. Thus, Christ-the-Man reaches the total quietude, at the end of His sufferings, like we too reach the dispassion by suffering our detachment from passions. The hegumen Basil Kondikakis from Mount Athos say that him who stays stretched on the cross for his love for others, he is being rested (Eisodicon, Saint Month Athos, 1974). He is rested by the satisfaction of having done that for others, but also by the fact that he has been liberated from the agitation had by his passions within him. Within him there has remained only the clean love for other, a love brought all the way to the end, a love defeating any egotism. We must notice here that in this writing the quietude is reckoned as equal to locking oneself into his monastic cell, a locking up that is united with the renunciation to all pleasures.

dishonor, it truly can bring you to the measure of the cross into Christ Jesus our Lord Who it is due the glory forever. Amen.

186. (V. 109) The same of the same one towards the Great Oldman: Pary for me, Father, for I am very troubled.

The answer of Barsanuphius: May God of the heavens and of the earth fulfill, by the prayer of His saints, to fulfill your asks which I am praying with the whole my heart for[370]. But because you want to listen to and to rejoice of what I am saying, you are the ones forcing me to speak, so that to be fulfilled with me the word: "I have become mindless, you have forced me to" (2 Cor. 12: 11). But I, even before you asked me, I felt burning within me as a flame of a powerful fire, the love of Christ Who told me: "Love you neighbor as on yourself" (Lev. 19: 18). And this burning and this boiling with the ghost makes me not to cease praying, say and night, to God, in order God to make you God-bearers and God to dwell within you and God to walk within you (2 Cor. 6: 16) and God to send you His Holy Ghost, the "Ghost of the Truth", so that the Holy Ghost to come a teach you all the things and to Him to lead you to all the truth (Jn. 16: 13; 17: 26), in order Him to make you inheritors of the heavenly goods "which the eye hasn't seen and the ear hasn't heard and at the man's heart they haven't ascended" (1 Cor. 2: 9). And I have made himself to you like a parent striving to teach his children: how to serv in the shiny army of the Emperor while worrying not of themselves. May God give you the burning of such a love. This is for the lord will assure you that he elevated to the seventh sky the people who have this

[370] The asks of the Great Oldman, which were set in movement by the asks of the one who asks the Oldman to pray for him, they are in the same addressed to the Saints in order the Saints do add their prayers to his prayer and to the prayers of him who set his prayers in movement. All the things are being intertwined. Those you are lower are supported and reinforced by the ones from higher, and those from higher are set in movement by those from lower. This is a meeting for making whole, it is a communion of the completion I the prayer of everybody, in a way around him who is the lowest, though he has addressed his ask for him who is higher. There is in it an ascension from the lowest to the highest and there is also a descent from the highest to the lowest. But all of them ascend through this completing prayer towards God, or God makes them united themselves in this communion of the prayer into Him. No one will ascend towards God and into God if alone. But all the believers together. This is the Church.

love[371], as some people have already ascended and they are blessed[372], "either into body, I do not know, or outside the body, I do not know, God knows" (2 Cor. 12: 2).

And, in order you to find out the beginning of this joy, listen to me. First, there comes to the man the Holy Ghost Who teaches the man all the things and how the man must humble himself in cogitation. Then, while guided by that first burning, the man ascends to the first sky and then after to the second sky and gradually up to the seventh sky. And there the man can hear untold and fearsome things, which cannot be heard by anyone who haven't ascended to that measure, which I wish you to be found worthy of, by the Lord. There can reach they who have consummately died to the world through patience in many troubles.

Of, my beloved brother, our Lord endured the cross but you do not rejoice yourself of the troubles which once endured will take you to the Kingdom of Heavens? You were right saying that you are troubled. Don't you know that when somebody asks the Fathers to pray for him to God so that God to help him, his troubled and trials will be multiplied in order him to be tested? So, you must not ask for bodily resting if the Lord doesn't give that to you. This is because the Lord gets disgusted while looking at the body's resting. And He also said to us: "Inot the world you will have troubles" (Jn. 16: 33). May the Lord help you in everything. Forgive me for the things I said to you. This is because I have spoken like one who asks for many things but without having himself those things. But I told you the things I know about others, about the saints. Pray for me.

187. (V. 110) The same one, by thinking that the death of the Great Oldman was near, and because he got sad regarding his salvation and regarding the salvation of the entire community

[371] The consummate love liberated one of worries. This is all the more for him who loves he knows that he loves the Almighty, and he answers the love of Almighty Who is going to take care of all his things.

[372] He who is blessed by God he will also be bestowed by God with that what is said in that blessing. In the note from Volos Edition is said: "I think that the saint says these about himself. This is for him who guides others on this untold and non-comprised way of the kidnapping to God, he is proven of having walked, in the first place, on this way, through the mysterious power of the Ghost".

from that monastery, he let the Great Oldman know that, and the Great Oldman answered him:

All-beloved brother, by being you moved by the godlike love, you have uttered words of humbleness, and so you have awakened also the compassion of some merciless men on a sinful and all-unimportant man. And what could I tell you, because I lack both compassion and love? I am overwhelmed by your words and I have nothing to give you in return. If I had something, I would tell you. I will not leave you orphans either during these last years of my life or on the last day. But I will remain with you, by the commandment of God Who makes all things towards the salvation or our souls, for we are His servants. And I won't remain for me, but I will remain for you who ask me for that, in order you to bring fruits into God through me, so that I will bring your salvation as fruits to Him. You pray, therefore, in order I to be able to tell Him: "Behold I and the children You have given to me" (Isa. 8: 18; Hebr. 2: 19); You guard them into Your name (Jn. 17: 11); cover them with Your right hand, guide them to the shore of Your life and written their name into Your book (Apoc. 21: 27)[373]. Give them the downpayment of the life, gladdening them and telling them: "Do not fear, little herd, for your Father has deigned to give you the Kingdom" (Lk. 12: 32). And you also pray Him to give me to tell Him: "Father, given me that where I am there to be my children as well" (Jn. 17: 24), into the untold life. Believe me, brother, that my ghost aspires to tell to my Master Who rejoices of the ask of His servant: "Master, bring my children together with me into Your Kingdom, or erase me too from Your book" (Exod. 32: 32)[374]. By my weakness and carelessness impede me from having such a daring. Still, God's mercy is great.

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[373] "To the shore that You wanted", where they are escaped from the agitation of the worries and of the passions; into the Kingdom of that resting into You, where they have everything together with You in the endless life.

[374] He who can renounce to his eternal happiness due to his love for others, he cannot lose the eternal happiness, for the eternal happiness is right in that love for other brought to the very end. So, they who do not reach this love, they won't be able to taste the whole happiness of the eternal Kingdom. On the other hand, it is impossible that they who are so much loved by him who is ready to renounce to his eternal happiness for them, they too not having caught some degree of love. "In the house of My Father there are many dwelling places" (Jn. 14: 2), it can indicate the levels of love which diverse persons will be on. And as there are not two people having the same degree of love, one could say that each human being has her/his own degree of love and according to that each human being will have her/his own dwelling place.

So, by having us such a Master, let's get comforted, by believing doubtlessly that He will have mercy on us. God wont' overlook the tiredness of the ascesis of our asleep Fathers and of those who are still alive, but God will say: "I will spare this place for Me and for those who served Me with the whole their heart in this place". This is for I believe, without doubting, that there are some fathers in this place who can gain the mercy for God for the tens of thousands of people, and they won't be refused. The Lord will answer the ask of those who beg Him for His eyes to be upon this place (3 Kings[375] 8: 29). This is for their prayers ascend to Him like some lightnings lightening like the sunrays and they gladden the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit[376].

Therefore, let's take heed, brother, only at ourselves, for God takes care of this place. This is for this place has become a resting place for His servants, and in this place is being fulfilled the word: "Voice of gladness and of salvation in the tents of the righteous" (Ps. 117: 15[377]). Therefore, it is characteristic to the right hand of the Lord to work powerfully, and to give us strength, and to destine us to walk on the traces of our Fathers "in teaching, in living, in long-patience, in love, in patience, in persecutions, in sufferings" (2 Tim. 3: 10-11), in all the things coming to them from their enemy in felt and thought manner.

This is because, if they didn't' gain something characteristic to their life, how could they be their children? This is for the Lord Himself says: "If you were the children of Abraham, you would do Abraham's things" (Jn. 8: 39). If we do not suffer together with them, according to our power, how will

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But that won't impede the communication among them who are in the same "house". On the opposite, only in such a case they will rejoice of the communication among themselves, for everyone has something of his own to tell to another, or something new to hear from another. And by that all of them will eternally ascend, as the angels do. But each of them will be on another level, and they will communicate and they will receive from other their own communication contents, and by that promoting on one another in that ascension.

[375] In KJB we have: 1 Kings. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[376] In the Volos Edition, in a note: "If the saint confesses all these things about others, all the more he may confess them about himself as well. This is for he overwhelmed everybody with his virtues and charismas".

[377] In KJB we have: Ps. 118: 15: "The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly."; in ROB we have: Ps. 117: 15: "Voice of joy and of deliverance in the tents of the righteous: "The right hand of our Lord has made power," (E. l. t.'s n.)

us be extolled together with them on that hour[378]? If we do not die together with them, by cutting off our own will[379], how will us rise together with them and waiting for hearing: "Come, you the blessed ones of My Father and inherit the Kingdom prepared for you" (Mt. 25: 34). Brother, if God fulfills our asks for we have our Fathers as guides, let's take heed lest our laziness and drowsiness or carelessness or faithlessness will separate us from them. This is for he says: "And if the faithless wants to part with you, let him party" (1 Cor. 7: 15). Let's remember Him Who said that "he who will endure to the very end, he will be saved" (Mt. 5: 18). Let's pray to God ceaselessly (1 Thes. 5: 18), in order Him not to separate us from our Fathers neither in this age or in the age to come. Where could we God if we forsook Him? What could we find better than Him? Let's not forsake the light because of searching for darkness.

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[378] We won't be able to reach to be strong and free, namely to the glory of the true people, and together with Christ as man, if we haven't defeated all the things which enslave us and which show us a weak people, and if we haven't been strengthened by enduring the troubles, as Christ has strengthened His humanity by enduring His sufferings.

[379] If we do not die to that life that leads us towards death or to that life that is weak because of the egotistic passions mastering it, by cutting off our own will, a will that actually is not ours and that rather enslaves us, we won't be able to be "elevated" to the powerful and immortal life, because such a life is truly free and in loving communication with Christ God Whose humanity was the first one elevated at that immortal and eternal life, through cross and resurrection, due to the godlike hypostasis Whom His life was united with.

The human nature cannot reach this freedom and immortality by itself; this would have meant an identity of the human nature to the Godhead, in a pantheistic meaning. But God is transcendent to the world and to the man. The fact that the things of the world are submitted through them to some Laws, and the man is submitted also to some temptations, it shows that the things and the man aren't the supreme and absolute free reality. But there must be such a reality that is supreme and unsubmitted to any law or to any enslaving temptation. And such a reality must be a Person, for only a Person can be absolutely free. Neither the law is free regardless how supreme the law would be. And for the absolute freedom cannot be manifested except in love, in a love that has not shortcoming, the supreme reality must be a consummate communion among persons, namely a (pluri-)Persons communion and still consummately one. Only in communion with that supreme Person the man can receive his consummate and fully-loving freedom, by which the man to overwhelm everything than can enslaved him from the part of the world or of his body which make him affirm an autonomy that he actually doesn't have. This height has been communicated by a godlike Person of a humanity that that Person has made it How own, so that through it Him to communicate that height to all the people who want that, to a humanity which He will never part with. But the people won't be able to become free, or masters on all the things which can enslave them, if they do not want to be free by dying to everybody, though they can be free only through those ones. Into Christ the absolute freedom and the immortality, though they spring out of the transcendent godhead, they have found to themselves a ring which they are communicated to the human community through.

Let's not leave the sweetness of the honey because we take the venom of the snake. Let's not envy on ourselves and let's not hate the illness and love the death. Lest we will receive curses instead of blessings. Let's not anger Christ by serving our enemy. Let's stay awake, let's take vigil, let's step nimbly, let's always be ready, and let's wake ourselves up from the too deep sleep. Let's understand that what God has bestowed to us: not to be under the feet of the saints, but to be the saints' sons and together inheritors with the saints. Blessed is that soul who has tasted these things. Blessed in that soul who was wounded by such a love. Blessed in that soul who has been conquered by these things. Blessed in that soul who cogitates at these things. Blessed in that soul who has stuck himself with these things. Blessed in that soul who is worthy fop these things. Blessed is that soul who put its faith in these things. Blessed is that soul who is consummate in these things. This is for that soul is waited for by the joy and the gladness and the rewards in the Kingdom of Heavens, in the eternal light, there where are present the angels and the archangels and all the heavenly powers, towards the glory of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Pray for me, brother.

188. (V. 129) The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same one and towards the brothers living together with that one, who asked for the Great Oldman's prayer's help against the enemies, and to tell them about the life of the other Oldman: Abba John.

Rejoice into the Lord, my all cherished and all-beloved children. May the Lord fulfill your asks with many goods and weaken within you the arrow of the powerful ones and you to girdle yourselves with power (1 Kings[380] 2: 4). You amaze me that you want the benefit of your souls as I want it too, and I pray God, day and night, for the salvation of your souls. I am not saying that you don't want it, but I am saying that you do not know it. This is because from here are starting to become seen the groups and the levels and the measures; and which the inheritance will be. And as a man illustrious in the world and experienced in the things of the present life and knower of

[380] In KJB we have: 1 Samuel. (E. l. t.'s n.)

the ranks and of the honors of the soldiers, he strives to make his sons to fight for power, but his sons are inexperienced and careless and they do not know anything about the honors of the great soldiers, but they want to be masters in wielding their weapons, likewise I am doing to you too. But, forgive me because I have spoken like a mindless one. This is because, my coming to my senses, I have remembered that I am "dust and ashes" (Gen. 18: 27), a bag full of all evilness. And I started to mourn. What have I spoke and said above? Why has the dust and the ashes praised themselves? Still, because I have reached to say that I desire your salvation and that I desire to make myself the cause of all your good, I will do, if I can, everything I will able to do[381].

And about my of-one-soul-with-me son, about the blessed and humble obedient, who has cut off all his will to the death, what can I say to you? Our Lord said: "He who has seen Me, he has seen the Father" (Jn. 14: 9). And He said about disciple that he can do everything "as his teacher" (Lk. 10: 40): "He who has ears to hear, let him hear" (Mt. 11: 15). Forgive me and pray for me.

189. (V. 130) The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman, regarding the health of Abba who was ill for a long time; and about the souly passions. And if he must visit the old man living in vicinity. And where it comes from the fact that the body feels sick.

[381] Paradoxes of the humbleness and of the love: I suffer because I reckon that I brag myself by telling you that I want your salvation and that I work for your salvation, and in the same time I rejoice myself for doing that. On the other hand, you feel the need for I to assure you about those. And I myself feel driven to give you this sign of life. I cannot do much for your salvation; but I do everything I can; and this is a big deal. The man is more comforted by the thought that somebody does everything that one can for him, than by the thought of doing everything he can for himself. It is the greatest thing to exhaust to death a helpless life for others than to help them by giving the huge surplus without feeling that you will have diminished your power by doing that. Christ worked for us not by elevating us spiritually through an almighty godlike power, but by descending Himself to the weak state of a man, but capable of dying for us. This way of working had an unparallelly greater effect that if He used the work by commandment. This is the glory of the weakness that gives everything for out of love. "The glory of Your bowing down, Christ", we sing at the Lord's Burial Service. The weak power of the body taken by Him it is being exhausted for us. But in the deed of surrendering the body it is shown the much greater deed of the spirit that wants to go infinitely and into eternity, even by accepting the death for in earthly life.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Rejoice, brother, into the Lord. Regarding the health of my son, some of the saints from here could pray for him so he wouldn't be sick even for a day, as I assured him. And it would be so. But in such a case he wouldn't have the fruits of the patience. Doesn't he know what I suffered of? Sickness, fever, troubles, until I have come to this shore of the appeasement. The sick is very beneficial to him by patience and thanking.

Regarding the passions, the man must drive his body as on a slave, in deprivations and in troubles, according to the capacity of enduring.

And visiting that brother it will be a good thing, but gossiping is a dirty thing. This deed testes you. Visit that brother but shun yourself from much-speaking, but, as in the meetings of the Holy Fathers, tell him, for instance: "How are you, Abba?". And then: "Tell us a work of the life. How can we find the path to God. Pray for me for I have many sins", and other similar things. Finally, utter a prayer and leave him in peace.

The body's burden comes out of the evil mixing between your drowsiness and that heaviness coming from the devils. May the Lord strengthen you in order you to fight them according to the law and you to be crowned (2 Tim. 2: 5) into Christ Jesus our Lord Who it is due the glory and the mastery forever and ever. Amen. Pray for me, brother.

190 (V. 131) An answer of the Great Oldman towards the same one: Brother, you told me: "I am sick in my soul and in my body". Bu why then don't you confess your sins so that you to become healthy in you will? You do not know what is beneficial to the soul and to the body. But what is beneficial to your will cannot be known better that you, even by tens of thousands of specialists. Don't you see that I am biting you continuously? If you can, endure that. This is for I am speaking like a mindless one: And because I am speaking like that you are speaking to me likewise. And by talking to you, I am showing that I do not know what is beneficial to me[382]. May the

[382] The best method to heal up the egotistic will is the patience, which there is another will in. That is an experience that nobody can live it as much as does it him who practices the patience. Only him lives that effort. Barsanuphius reckoned the advices he gave through his

Lord give us understanding in all things. Forgive me and pray for me.

191. (V. 132) The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman, asking also for the Great Oldman's payers: I pray you, honored Father, tall me what is the good will and what is the bad will? In order I to be able to understand your holy words. And forgive me and pray for me, in order I to be delivered from devil and from the disturbance he causes me.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, "all the resting of the body is disgusting to our God" (Paterikon, Pimen 38). This is for Himself said: "Narrow and full of troubles is that way that leads to life" (Mt. 7: 18). So, in choosing this narrow path it consists the good will. And him who keeps this path he chooses to himself a willing trouble in everything, according to his power. Don't you know what the Apostles says: "I torment my body and I bear it enslaved" (1 Cor. 9: 27)? Can you see that even without the body wanting that, the Apostle drives his body enslaved by his will? He who had this good will of the salvation, he must mix in everything a little trouble. For instance: I have the occasion to sleep on a wool mattress, but I choose to torment myself a little, if this can be reckoned as a torment, so that I choose to sleep on a strows mattress that is a little harder; and this is only for the helplessness of my body, being I ashamed by the fact that others sleep on the floor, or on a board, or others put under their heads a pillow of corn stalks, as the one among saints Arsenius (Paterikon, Arsenius 36), and

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letters as equally numerous bites and him who endures those patiently, he will heal his will as it is due. That will that doesn't accept the advice it is a weak will, a will that doesn't work towards strengthening that man and towards peace among people. But the saints take upon himself the guilt of his brother who doesn't accept patiently the advices given to him. This is for the Saint challenges that one, by his will to teach, to reach in the defense of his will. These are the impasses often appearing among people. I want to teach another to renounce to his own will, in his benefit. But maybe him sees in that, and not wrongly, my impulse to impose him my will. He who advises another, he must reach a humbleness making totally obvious the fact that he doesn't advises except when insistently asked for, and only in the benefit of him who asks for that advice, and thus he will be able to avoid a bad effect both upon him and upon his brother. But, in order somebody to insistently ask for an advice and for him to follow that advice, him too is required to having reached a peak of the humbleness. That is a road that both of them must travel, in order they to be able to use one another without any danger, in order to avoid the friction among people in the practice of advising one another.

like many others like him. Others slept by leaning their heads on brambles, choosing that torment to themselves. Have I nearby the water I use for cooking? I must choose, as a lover of tormenting myself, a water source that is farer, so that I will bring a little trouble to my body. Can I eat good and clean bread? I must choose the second-hand bread, so that I to torment myself a little, by remembering them who didn't taste anything cooked, and especially reminding our Master Jesus Who tasted the gall and the vinegar for me. This is that will according to God. And that will according to body it searches for resting in all the opposite things. Don't you understand what are we saying? Behold, I am saying to you: "Shut quickly that door, so that I won't catch a cold". Or: "Brother, you have smoked the food and I cannot eat it", and other similar things. This is the evil will. You must cut off this will and you will be saved. And if you are tormented by it, you must blame yourself and agree your neighbor[383].

You lazy brother, trust the Lord, that "my soul has got thinned like the nets of a spider" (Ps. 38: 15[384]). One gains his salvation with tiredness. And how much deceives himself him who thinks that he will be saved despite him resting in everything! If you toil a little together with me, I will pray God to fulfill your ask. And when you remember God and His saints, the devil and his disturbance will get far from you. If I said that I do not pray the Lord to strengthen you and to give you power in all the good things, I would lie. But "the Kingdom of god belongs to them who strive themselves" (Mt. 11: 12). If we do not force ourselves a little, how could we be saved[385]? Or, how

[383] If you are defeated by your evil will, by your lust, and by your desire for comfort, you won't be able to liberate yourself from those without admitting that yourself are guilty and by agreeing another, namely inversely to what you are doing like when fulfilling the will of the evil one, while thinking that you would actually fulfill your own will.

[384] In KJB we have: Ps. 39: 11: "When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity. Selah."; in ROB we have: Ps. 38: 15: "And You have thinned up his soul like a spider net; but vainly gets trouble any earthling." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[385] The Kingdom of God belongs to them whoa re powerful in their kindness, in their gentleness, in their humbleness, and in they consummate generosity; the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are powerful in their will of not searching for satisfying their pride and passions, and to those who have been made emperors but they have contributed too to become emperors over themselves. It is always mentioned the "strengthening" and the "power" given by God to those ones. They commit an act of power, of "force" upon themselves, in order they to get rid of their condition as rags, of slaved to their own passions and anger and

could the prayer power of the saints to gain many things, if it didn't work with the deed (Jas. 5: 16)? Pray for me, brother.

192. (V. 133) The answer of the other Oldman towards the same one and towards the brother living together with that brother.

May our Lord Jesus Christ our God to bless you "with all the spiritual blessing" (Eph. 1: 3) and with the grace of the righteousness[386]. Himself is to me a testimony that I want the resting of any man, and especially yours. I am talking to you as to ones of-the-same-soul with me[387], to you who want to willingly walk on the way which we have been walking on, deprived and troubled for His name. Brother, I do not remember myself taking this path for I have found in it the consummate resting, but we have been always mixing in it a little narrowing and trouble of any sorts, because of fearing Him Who says: "You have taken the good things during your earthly life" (Lk. 16: 25) and "Through many troubles must we enter the Kingdom of God" (Acts 14: 22). And this was despite we have been having a lot of money. Himself knows that we have been living in poverty for Him Who has made Himself poor for us (2 Cor. 4: 9). It is not good for us to rest ourselves in anything. He who wants such thing he lives to himself and not to God. This is because one like this cannot cut off his will. Pray for me, brothers.

193. (V. 134-135) The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Tell me, my Abba, I am suffering of thoughts since morning to almost the second hour, and I do not know where this one comes to me. And tell this too: How can the devil depict in my imagination the face of a woman or of somebody else? That image is right in the thought and they do not come to me separately, but together. And what should I do to liberate myself from those?

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greediness, and they to get rid of their quality of toys to all sorts of contrary forced, of demons, and to get rid of their own delusion that by fulfilling their own will they would be powerful.

[386] With the whole grace that makes you righteous, and that fill you up with all virtues.

[387] The French translation usually renders the Greek expression *ομόφυχος* by "as to myself". That means: I feel you, or I live you as on myself.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, if somebody sits without working, he will be occupied with the thoughts coming to him. And if somebody works, he won't find time to receive those thoughts. Therefore, you must wake up early morning and take you mill under your mastery and mill with it your wheat for the bread of your food[388]. This is for, if your enemy takes if before you, you will mill into your mill tares instead of wheat[389].

As about the second question, brother, the painters depict faces by using colors. And if the board which those faces have been painted on, it come to it natural state, those images will disappear. Liberating yourself of those images means stopping in advance the painting of your board. Let's fight and do what it depends on our power and God will come and help us. Pray for me and forgive me into the Lord.

194. (V. 80) The ask of the same one towards the same Great Oldman for praying for him and of the ones living with him.

The answer of Barsanuphius: My beloved children, I am embracing you into the Lord, and I pray the Lord to guard you against all evil and to give to you patience as to Job and grace as to Josephus, and gentleness as to Moses and manhood in wars as to Joshua Navi (Sirach 46: 1[390]) and mastery upon your thoughts as to Judges and power of submission as to David and Solomon and mastery upon the land as to Israelis who have brought peace into it; may it be given to you the forgiveness of your sins together with the health of your bodies as to the many who had palsy (Mt. 9: 2-6) and may Him escape you from the storm as He did to Peter (Mt. 14: 31); may Him deliver you from troubles as He did to Paul (2 Tim. 3: 11) and to the other

[388] In the Volos Edition: "The mill is the mind. If the man has within his mind good and useful thoughts, he won't be able to occupy himself with evil thoughts".

[389] The mind is continuously milling and it nourished itself with that what it mills. If the mind mills evil thoughts, it will get poisoned by those. In addition to that, the thought related to things are monotonous, because of not elevating the man in ever new areas. The thought which the man plans worldly arrangements though, they help him succeed ever better, but the man still remain within those thoughts' limited horizon.

[390] This book, called *The Book of the Wisdom of Joshua Navi, the Son of Sirach (The Ecclesiastes)*, it is not given in KJB, but it is given in ROB. The interested reader can find it on www.academia.edu under the title *Bible Missing Texts*, together with other thirteen other books (E. l. t.'s n.)

Apostles; may Him shelter you against all evil as on His true sons and may Him fulfill the asks of your hearts towards the benefit of your soul and of your body in His name. Amen. Pray for me.

195. (V. 136) The ask and the begging of the same one addressed to the same Great Oldman to pray for being given him those goods fitting the soul.

The answer of Barsanuphius: I rejoice into the Lord and the Lord rejoices into me when good asks are made by my children to me. Namely for the salvation of the soul and for the eternal life. Therefore, you and your ghost must rejoice too, brother, for I have made you a soldier in an exquisite army, so that you to ceaselessly be in the treasury of the untold goods. And you are in that even from now. Therefore, take heed at gaining shiny vestments fitting the army's honor, so that you won't be removed from that army; a humble and wise heart and a well-composed face stranger to any angry or mirky movement. This is for such things need the servants who are in such a place: to be estranged from passions and dressed up in wedding vestments, so that they won't be removed form that place with a big disgrace.

Behold, therefore, that you have joined the army. Do not reject it. That depends on you. I have brought you into the army, you must not leave it. I have separated you from the ones from on the right hand, you must not mix yourself again with those. I have blessed you, so that you must not search for the curse. I have asked you to serve as a soldier in untold and righteous and clean treasuries, but the Ghost told me that it wasn't the time yet. But if somebody strive to make the left as the right and to make the former man as a new man, towards receiving the Holy and Worshipped Ghost, the Ghost will tec ah him all things and He will guide him in such tents where only a few people enter, due to his high obedience, gentleness, and patience[391]. Therefore, you mustn't be lazy, but you must work.

[391] The virtues are a whole (but a whole matching each man). The whole man is elevated on always a new level of knowing himself and the reality, in ever higher and more luminous areas. In those is not active only the man, but also the Holy Ghost. This is for the man is not alone in everything the man does. In evil deeds he is together with the seen and unseen evil ones, and under their influence, or imprinted by their influences. In the good deeds the man is

And you must not prepare to you that food that rots, but you must prepare to yourself that food that remains for the eternal life and that nourished the eternal life into Christ our lord into Whom you must always strengthen yourself, my blessed brother.

196. (V. 137) The same one asked the same Great Oldman to pray for him and top show him how can one become worthy of the clean and spiritual life.

The answer of Barsanuphius: All-beloved brother into the Lord, God have given us to walk without difficulty on the way of His wills that leads us to the eternal life. And I am telling you what this is and what can we gain it like, to that us to achieve the eternal goods. Our Lord Jesus Christ said: "Ask, and you will be given, search, and you will find, knock on the door and it will be open to you" (Mt. 7: 7). Therefore, pray to our good God for Him to send us His Holy Ghost, the Comforter, and the Ghost will teach us about everything. And he will unveil us all mysteries. You must ask for yourself to be guided by the Ghost. And so the Ghost won't leave within your heart any straying or disturbance; the Ghost won't leave into you thinking any sadness or sigh. The Ghost will enlighten your eyes and H will uphold your heart and He will elevate your mind. You must stick yourself with Him. You must believe Him. You must love Him. This is for the Ghost makes wise even the mindless, and He sweetens the understanding and He gives power and He teaches and He bestows the word and He gives joy and justice and long-patience and gentleness and love and peace. So, you have the strong Rock, so you must not get discouraged. This is because the winds and the rains and the rivers won't be able to tear down that house build on this Rock. You have the Great Helmsman Who rebukes the winds and the sea and He appeases them. And the ship is guarded not to sink. You have the Good Teacher Who commands you not to look behind but you to stretch towards the things ahead. Behold the impossible

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together with the good ones, seen and unseen, together with the people on earth and with the saints bodily moved away from us, but he is especially with the Holy Ghost as godlike Person actively penetrating the deepest and - in a way - not fully conscious intimacy of ours. And as He elevated us to the things of the good, He open within us other horizons of the infinite good comprised in Him.

to steal treasure, behold the impossible to tear down tower. What do you praise me for? This is because I couldn't reach those if I do not defeat my anger and if I do not chock up my wrath and if I do not gain that state of serenity which God rests Himself in. Therefore, let's leave the cunningness and let's impropriate the innocence. Let's dig deep and let's plan into our field that fruitful vine and let's prepare ourselves for the wine of the gladness, so that by getting us drunk with it, we to forget our troubles and our pains which want to master upon us towards our soul's perdition[392].

Brother, the will of our Master is that us to be saved. Why don't we want that? You just always pray for a long time so that the grace of the Ghost to com to us. By being the Fathers filled up with His joy, they stock themselves with the Ghost shouting out with a consummate love: "Who will separate us from the love of Christ?" (Rom. 8" 35). And they answered: "Nothing will be able to do that". Let's therefore love, in order us to be loved; let's come closer in order us to be received; let's humble us very much in order us to be elevated (Mt. 23: 12): let's cry in order us to laugh (Lk. 6: 21); let's get sad in order us to rejoice; let's weep in order us to be comforted (Mt. 5: 5). Let's pray the Ghost to come to us in order Him to guide us to the whole truth (Jn. 16: 13). This is for is not lying Him who says: "Ask and you will be given" (Jn. 16: 24). May the Lord help us in everything with His mercy, in order us to find out who we are and what we need and what we must want[393]. To Him is due the glory forever. Amen.

197. (V. 111) The ask of the same one towards the same Great Oldman to pray God to help him advance.

[392] That is the drunkenness brought by the Holy Ghost upon Apostles at Pentecost. That is in the same time the enthusiasm for the totally new state of happiness born out of living the understanding of some high realities, and also born out of forgetting about the grey reality usually appearing to us as an impossible to defeat narrowness.

[393] You couldn't really know on yourself if you do not know God. You need the endless light of God, in order you to see where you are, to see which target you must advance to, and you to see which path you must walk on. If you do not know your own purpose, you won't know on yourself either. If you do not know your responsibility to the supreme forum, you won't know yourself. If the light of an all-comprising horizon is not projected upon you, you won't understand on yourself.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, pray the kindness of Him Who "wants all the people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2: 4), to give you that spiritual watchfulness that light up the spiritual fire which He came to cast on earth (Lk. 12: 49), He Who is the Master of the heavens of the earth. And together with you I too am praying God, according to my power, for Him Who gives everyone what they ask for with tiredness and with much desire, to destine you too this gift. And by coming Him, He will guide you into truth. This is for He lightens the eyes and He straightens the mind and He banishes away the sleep of the drowsiness and of the carelessness and He makes sparking the ascetics' weapons previously covered by the poisonous rust of the idleness, and He makes their shiny their vestments previously dirtied in the slavery of the barbarians; He makes them feel disgusted of the bringer-of-death ugliness and He makes them desire to be satiated with the spiritual sacrifice brought by our Great Hierarch Who the prophet said about that He cleans up the sins and He erased the lawlessness (Ps. 50: 3[394]). To them who cry He destines to, and them who are humble He bestows the desired things; He waits for the worthy ones to give Himself to them, in order they to inherit through Him the eternal life in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Pray for me, brother.

198. (V. 112) The same one askes the same Great Oldman to pray for him in order him to be found worthy of "bearing within himself the killing of Christ" (2 Cor. 4: 10).

The answer of Barsanuphius: I joyfully pray God to fulfill to you this good ask of yours. And I believe that God will fulfill your ask. This is for He is not a liar when saying: "Ask and you will be given" (Mt. 7: 7). May God, therefore, fulfill your asks. Amen. But you too must take care of make a little effort for that. This is for, like them who want to be given high clerk positions by the Emperor, even if they have many supporters at the Emperor, until they succeed, they will endure troubles and

[394] In KJB we have: Ps. 51: 2: "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin."; in ROB we have: Ps. 50: 3: "More strongly wash me up of my lawlessness and clean me up of my sin." (E. l. t.'s n.)

dangers and toils, so that you too must make a little effort in order you to be given the great mercy. This is for "much can the working prayer of the righteous" (Jas. 5: 14). Tell to your brother that is together with you, to my beloved into the Lord: endure a little, for the Lord always rebukes you and by that He bestows you a great mercy. Do not cease rebuking on yourself. "This is for him whom the Lord love, the Lord rebukes him" (Prov. 3: 12; Hebr. 12: 6-7). I am embracing all of you into the Lord and I ask you to pray for me out of love.

199. (V. 113) The same one asked the Great Oldman to pray for him in order him to get out of the former man.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Listen to me, my beloved brother, and make your heart to guard the godlike words uttered you not from a man, but from the Holy Ghost. Jesus is the Doctor of our souls and bodies. If you have any wound, I am taking you to Him and I pray Him to heal you up, if you too want that[395]. This is for He is the Giver of all good gifts. And He fulfills not only your asks but much more than you ask for. This is for Jesus is the Son of God and the light and the power Who embodies Himself from the Holy Virgin Mary, and Who showed Himself on earth and he lived with the people and "He brought on Himself living and well-pleasant to God sacrifice" (Rom. 12: 2), and our Father "to make us to himself a chosen people, aspiring to good deeds" (Tit. 2: 14), "imperial priesthood, holy nation" (1 Pt. 2: 9). He Who has endured these for us, He has left us an example of patience and He rejoices when we ask Him (for following Him)[396]. Therefore, I pray Him to enlighten your

[395] The healing is given by God and the man cannot give his healing to himself; but God doesn't give the healing against man's will. Properly-said, it doesn't suffice the man not to resist God's work, but the man must receive that work by rejoicing of it. This is for the power of God doesn't disregard the man/s will, for God wants the man too to grow up spiritually; and the power of God is bestowed through God's Person-like's will, and it is not overpoured as a nature's force upon the man. The man's rejoicing of the work of God it is influenced by this work. But the man still can oppose it, so that the man opposed to reach in the situation of rejoicing himself of that power. The man's part cannot be separated from God's part. They form a whole. But in this whole of the savior work from within man there must be the man's part as well.

[396] How could Jesus not rejoice Himself when we ask Him for helping us to resemble Him? By this we become brothers of His and we together-inheritors with Him of the Father's Kingdom. That's why He made Himself man and He brought Himself as sacrifice as man, by

heart. But you too must toil and sweat. This is for the Son of God says: "Come to Me all of you who are burdened and I will rest you" (Mt. 11: 28)[397]. I am getting close to Him with much dare. But if you do not come closer to Him at your turn, I will feel a great shame[398]. Jesus doesn't reject anybody. He rewarded even the workers who came on the eleventh hour (Mt. 20: 6). Stuck yourself with Him and do yourself a little effort in order you to take the reward, and that reward might be equal to anybody's else. The Son of God made Himself man for you, you too must become god for Him[399]. This is for He wants this, but

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totally consummately surrendering Himself to the Father, as us too to be able to do that our of His power, by renouncing us to our egotism, and by surrendering ourselves to the Father and to one another. All Barsanuphius's advices are Christocentric. The image of Christ is the target which we advance towards in our efforts of consummation, and out of Him we take the power to do that. Especially out of His power that culminated in enduring the cross, we too take power to endure.

[397] Maybe we are asked here a partaking to the toil of him who prays for us, but it might be also that we are asked to be partakers to the toil of Chrit, as one could deduce out of the things said further on. Jesus is praying even now for us to the Father, by presenting His sacrifice as ground for that, as one can see from the *Epistle towards Jews* (7: 24-25).

[398] He who prays for somebody who doesn't make himself something for achieving what he asks for from God, he will turn back from Christ empty handed and ashamed. This is because that one doesn't open himself in order to receive the things asked for him from Christ. So, even the care for not seeing your brother ashamed, whom you have asked to pray for you to, you must do yourself something in order him not to get ashamed. You cannot be in the pub feasting, while a friend intervenes to somebody to get you a job, guaranteeing for you. If God sees another person asking something for you but you are unworthy of that, God won't give you what that person asks for you.

[399] He descended to what you are in order Him not to leave you there where you are, but in order Him to elevate you forever there where He is. But he doesn't do this without you willing it. Do yourself something so that Him to be able to elevate you to His state, for He has given you power to do yourself something on that purpose. The Son of the Heavenly Emperor has come to you in order Him to elevate you to the dignity of son of the Emperor and equal to Himself. You must receive what you are given. You must receive the power for Him in order you too to become powerful. He offers you a great honor, you must not refuse it. And this is in order you not to make His descent, His toil, His sacrifice in vain, by laughing at those. How much gentleness is shown in this love report instituted by the Son of God with us, by making Himself man! He bestows us the happiness in order us to rejoice of it. But he shows us that by doing us so we bring joy to Him too, for He makes us happy not only for our joy but also for His joy. The happiness flows out of Him and not out of ourselves. This means that his human nature is borne by a godlike hypostasis. But He ties His joy as Man to the receiving by us of the happiness He is bringing to us. By and large, our happiness would not be complete if there wasn't somebody else to rejoice for our happiness, and if we didn't try to bring happiness to others too through our happiness. Christ will rejoice if our happiness will increase others' happiness. Egotistically tasing the happiness isn't actually a happiness. The happy one is envied by others, and the happy one who doesn't communicate his happiness to others he won't be fully happy. Christ come to consummate the mode of our happiness according to the model of thew happiness of the Holy Trinity.

you too must want it. I too am praying for you in order you to be liberated form the former man. But you too must do something for that. God have given you mind, you too must give Him your mind in order Him to elevate your mind to heavens, so that your mind will cogitate at the realities from above, there where He is. This is for I too am praying for you to reach together with everybody "who love His name" (Ps. 68: 40[400]). On this way one could be liberated from his former man.

Jesus told His apostles: "You are the salt of the earth" (Mt. 5: 13). He called earth the body. This is for it is said: "Duts you are and into dust you will return" (Gen. 3: 19). Yourself must become salt, by salting and by drying the rottenness from within you, and by killing the worms, namely the good thoughts form within yourself. And if you do this, I will toil together with you to salt they together with you, in order they not to spread their stench, by increasing some through others. God, our Savior, He wants us to be saved. But it is our duty to ceaselessly shout out: "Save me, Lord!"[401]. And He will save you. This is for some ones shouted out and they reached "the shore of His will" (Ps. 106: 30[402])[403]. I hope you too will enter there, if you give me your hand according to your power[404]. This is for, by doing so, you too will reach there, according to him who said: "So you must run that you to grab: (1 Cor. 9: 24). Pray for me, in order I not to be condemned as one who talks but who he doesn't do what he talks about.

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[400] In KB we have: Ps. 69: 36: "The seed also of his servants shall inherit it: and they that love his name shall dwell therein."; in ROB we have: Ps. 68: 40: "And the nation of His believers will master it and they who love His name will inhabit it." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[401] In the conscience of our helplessness of existing and of saving ourselves by out power, there is the conscience that God has created us and He upholds us and He saves us. BY this we open ourselves to His power. Of our humbleness consists the possibility of our openness to God so that God to fill us up with power.

[402] In KJB we have: Ps. 107: 30: "Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven."; in ROB we have: Ps. 106: 30: "And they got gladdened, for the waves got appeased and thew Lord guided them to the desires shore." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[403] He who enters the God's will, or inside the things wanted by God, he will enter the quietude, for he will have entered that area where the live I not menaced by death.

[404] I am holding you by hand, but you too must hold me by hand as tight and you can. This matches also the union between the power given you by God and the power produced within us by His power. His power holds us up, but only if we want to be held up by it, and only if we too make efforts to hold ourselves on it. We must use all the power we have, or all the power wakened up by Him within us in order us to desire that power and us to open ourselves to it.

200. (V. 114) The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman about the diverse thoughts and about the true path to God.

The answer of Barsanuphius: All the things you have been writing me for I to ask God for them through my fewness, my non-worker brother, all those asks of your keep piling up: to liberate yourself of the former man and to reach the holiness of your soul and of your body and you to be saved with all the saints into the Kingdom of God. This is actually that measure that I showed it to you: you to deliver yourself and you to clean yourself of your former man. And I, mastered by my love, I will pray God to give you much more than you have asked for (Eph. 3: 20). And if you do not impede God through your drowsiness and through your carelessness[405], and you will wonder and you will extoll God for the way he will move you from inexistence to existence[406]. May God forgive you for the sins you have committed and may Him prepare forgiveness for you, for the things you have done after those.

Regarding the night-hallucinations, they are from the devil who tempts you because he envies you. The devil wants to mock you because you repent to God. The devil wants to show you that the repentance has no power. But yourself too must not bend down. This is for you have a great help in the prayers of the saints. When you are kidnapped by word or by deed to do

[405] We impede God to do His cleaning work upon us and to endow us with His gifts, not only by resisting Him directly and willingly, but also by remaining drowsy and careless and by not wanting to become powerful us too. This is for God wants us too to become powerful subjects, by using us His power. Not doing this is another stubbornness of ours opposing God. God lets Himself to be impeded by our drowsiness, for He doesn't want to lower us to the inferior level of some objects forcedly "saved". If we do not want ourselves too to be strong, and if we do not make efforts on this purpose, God cannot make us strong without us willing it. The lazy one doesn't oppose but he neither collaborates. One falls under the level of the human being by laziness as well.

[406] Being drowsy, not wanting to progress as itself your nature asks you to, it means letting yourself mastered and carries away like you would be an object. Bu by being a man you cannot be reduced though, by idleness, to the total state as object, but you will become the slave of your passions. Being drowsy means letting yourself be locked un in the prison of the helplessness and of the boring monotony, it means falling off the fulness of the existence in an apparent existence, in a nightmare, which you will no longer be able to make any liberation gesture, but there will be done with you – though it will seem to you that you are the one committing those – there will be done things which won't actually be done by yourself. This is the souly death on earth and then, as a peak of this death, it comes the eternal death.

wrong to somebody, you must force yourself to bow down before that one and God, by seeing that, He will cover you up against your enemies.

Regarding the foods, let's not take too much care of our body. This is because sometimes happened this to be a war from the devils, in order they to throw us into worries and, by persevering us into worries us to forsake the goods placed in front of us.

And about the true way towards God, I must not talk now to you about it for bringing you to despair. But you must believe that God will save you as a gift, through the prayers of the saints. This is for the prayer of the saints can make God lenient. Pray for me, brother.

201. (V. 115) The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman about idleness and about other thoughts.

The answer of Barsanuphius: God Who is the only One without sin, and "Who saves them who believe in Him" (Dan. 13: 60), may Him strengthen your love in order you to serve Him with holiness and with righteousness on all the days of your life (Lk. 1: 75) on the altar of the inward man, there where one brings to God thought sacrifices: gold, incense, and myrrh, and there where is being sacrificed the fattened calf and there where it is sprayed with the honored blood of the unblemished Lamb, there where one hears the voices full of harmony of the holy angels[407]. "Then they will put calves on Your altar" (Ps. 50:

[407] This inward altar of the man, which Mark the Ascetic also (*About Baptism* / *The Romanian Philokalia*, volume I, p. 282) and Kallistos the Patriarch (*Heads about Prayer* / *The Romanian Philokalia*, volume VIII, p. 328) - both of them - spoke about, it is not separated from the heavenly altar. That mind that is open to God it will communicate with the heavens where Christ is the Supreme Hierarch Who bring the supreme sacrifice to the Father, on the altar of the human heart, there where Christ stays in the consummate love of His Father for Him as man, and therefore also for us; that is the glorious sacrifice for the untold love manifested in it for us, by all the angelic groups. That man who feels this in his union with Christ, that man is himself penetrated by hat state of the Lamb who sacrifices Himself, and that man too will become gentler in this state of sacrifice. "The Kingdom of Heavens is within you". Together with Christ the Lamb, the man himself as a lamb brings sacrifice to God on the altar of his heart all his thoughts and feelings as some calves. The man is united at that spiritual height with the Father and also with all the saints and with all the people who are doing the same thing. The first one embraces him, and the last ones will be embraced by Him, spiritually, with love.

20[408]). "Then" ... when?! Then when our Lord comes, the Great Hierarch Who brings the bloodless sacrifice and he received it[409], then when in His name it is heard - by the ears of the man with palsy who stays at the beautiful gate of the temple – the joyful voice: "Stand up and walk" (Acts 3: 6)[410]. Then "He enters the temple, walking and jumping and praising God" (Acts 3: 8). Then ends the sleep of the idleness and of the nescience. Then the five wise virgins light up their candles and they enter, singing, together with the Bridegroom, the holy chamber of wedding (Mt. 25: 6, 10). Then the wise virgins urge on one another signing without disturbance: "Taste and see for the Lord is good. Blessed in the man who hopes in Him" (Ps. 33: 8[411])[412]. Then the wars and the defilements and the (passionate) impulses cease, and the holy peace of the quietude of the Holy Trinity becomes master[413]. And the treasure[414] is sealed and it will remain unrobbed. Pray yourself in order you to understand, to reach it and to rejoice of it into Christ Jesus our Lord. Who it is due the glory forever. Amen.

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[408] In KJB we have: Ps. 51: 19: "Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar."; in ROB we have: Ps. 50: 20: "Then You will accept the sacrifice of the righteousness, the offerings, and the total burnings; then they will put calves on Your altar." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[409] God brings Himself sacrifice as man and He receives Himself as God.

[410] The man with palsy in this case is that one who stays next to him whose house has become temple where our Lord has come and brings sacrifices. Christ raised him up from the palsy keeping him helpless in the slavery of his passions. He is being filled up now with power, he becomes healthy, so that he can use the resources of his nature. He can walk in good thoughts and deeds, united with Him whom Christ is within.

[411] In KJB we have: Ps. 34: 8: "O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.": in ROB we have: Ps. 33: 8: "Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who hopes in Him." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[412] The whole liturgy is a song of joy raised by the believer to God, in their communion with one another, for they are imparted with the All-Good One, and for they have been imparted with Him. The wise virgins are, during their earthly life, those souls who allow themselves to be influenced by Christ, souls who spread the light of Him Who is within them as in a temple.

[413] Into the Holy Trinity the love is peace, for there is the supreme unity in love among Trinity's Persons, for in this love They have everything. He who by fighting the wars which tempt him, wars coming him from thoughts and from worries related to the world, he will advance in quietude, he will advance into the peace of the Holy Trinity.

[414] The treasure of the goods and of the gifts from the Holy Trinity, which are given to that man who have been elevated to quietude by defeating his temptations by restraint, by patience, by humbleness, and by love. The treasure of these goods have become steadfast within such a man, and it is sealed within him by the long fighting for it.

202. (V. 116) The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman about the hidden temptation and about advancing.

The answer of Barsanuphius: I wonder about your love, brother, because you do not know the plots of the devils. As God confessed to Job the devils got man against Job. And when the devils found out that the child was about to be cleaned, the devils shook him (Mk. 9: 26). Likewise, when I see someone progressing, the devils tempt him because they envy him. But they do not tempt him who progresses by deed, because this one defeated the devils. But the devils tempt, with the lenience of God, on him who has started to advance by the grace of the prayers of the saints, so that he will know his weakness and he won't get proud for this gift. And there are numerous armies ordered ones above others, likewise there are many dwelling places at the Father of the lights placed ones above others. Because, if there weren't so, why would they be numerous?[415] May God strengthen you in His fear. Pray for me.

203. (V. 117) The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman about the progress of the soul and about him advising a brother and about the trust in him who is their common Father.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Believe me, my all-beloved one, that due to God you are not staying outside the gates of the Kingdom of Heavens. But you must carefully take heed at yourself in order you not to be removed from there. This is for it belong to God to bring inside that man whom the saints pray for, but it depends on that man to remain there and not to be removed from there[416]. And by the will of God, I am gradually lead you towards the peaks. So, you must have courage into the

[415] The fear of God strengthens the man, and it doesn't annul the man. This is for the fear of God makes the man fighting everything that enslaves him, in order the man to be free out of God and for God, in order the man to receive within himself the high riches of God. God likes receiving the love from the man who is strong in his freedom, and not from a slave.

[416] The prayers of others for us take us into the Kingdom od God, but only our own deeds will stabilize us there, by giving our person stability in good.

Lord and you must walk zealously on His path, and you will be helped by Him in His name.

As about that brother, you must behave to him with a humble heart and you will speak to him if God sends something within your heart in order you to tell it to that brother. Think at the fact that, because it was necessary, God opened even the mouth of the donkey (Num. 22: 28). And if everything is from God, you will attribute to God the benefit coming to your brother through you. And if God sees your humbleness, He will place on your account the payment for that advice, despite being Him the One Who gave that word to your mouth[417]. Thus, he will be fulfilled to you what was written: "A brother helped by a brother are like a fortified stronghold surrounded by walls" (Prov. 18: 19). Our Lord Jesus Christ will help us to do every good thing. Regarding the most-unimportant servant among all, if God has bestowed you the trust in that one, God is Him Who gives the increase and the guarding[418]. This is for the all-unimportant one cannot unveil mysteries to people, but "God makes all things in everybody" (1 Cor. 15: 28). Forgive me, brother, and pray for me.

204. (V. 118) The question of the same brother towards the other Oldman: What should do him who wants to appease himself in withdrawal for the name given to you. This is because of fearing that such a name above his actual condition will cause him losses, as the Fathers said: "Woe to that man whose name is above his work" (Paterikon, Silvan 10). And if he must talk to some people or to nobody at all.

The answer of John: The name of the glory which are above work had by somebody do not harm him who doesn't enjoy the said things or who doesn't approve those, as neither him who is accused of committing a homicide won't be found guilty if he hasn't committed that crime. One like this must

[417] God sand the man reciprocally attribute the good advice. Only the man's humbleness, who attributed everything he receives to God, it truly can give good advices. God, at His turn, he attributed to the man's humbleness the serving brought by the man to God as humble tool of the advices given by God Himself.

[418] This all-unimportant servant if Barsanuphius himself. He humbly speaks about himself at the third person. He answers the affirmation of the brother about trusting him, by telling him that the brother must trust God Who has given him power.

think that: "They have this opinion about me because of not knowing who I really am".

And talking to some people but not to other people, or rejecting some people while welcoming others, it will make that one to make differences among people. But him who totally reject this worry – I am talking according to my stupidity – he does right, by knowing his helplessness[419].

205. (V. 119) the question of the same one towards the same Oldman: I pray you, honored Father, descend to my helplessness, and if somebody among the fathers wants to come and enter my monastic cell in order to do me a prayer, allow me to receive him. This is for I see myself as burdened by idleness. Allow me to do that until God will strengthen my soul through your prayers.

The answer of John: I pray your love, my brother, not to throw me upwards, for I am mindless and I will get proud. And I must realize that I am low. When you tall me "descend", it means that I would sit into height. But don't you know that I am required (by God) to be lower than any man? He who is beneath he will have not place where to descend lower.

You have the advice of the Holy Apostle: "Examining all the things, you will keep the good" (1 Thes. 5: 21). Everything a man does out of his fear for God, it will be beneficial to his soul. So, if you benefit out of meeting another, I do not impede you from this beneficial thing. But among those coming to you in order to pray for you and to be beneficial to you, I reckon myself useless. Besides, either you meet other or not, may God to strengthen your true love. Why am I counted among the people useful to others, while I am searching that for myself? My joy it is your gain[420]. So, by meeting and by benefitting of those

[419] He who avoid talking to all people he will no longer be worried about choosing whom to talk.

[420] I am not praying only for your benefit – says John – but for myself as well. This is for by making you benefit out of my prayers I too gain out of the love which I am doing those prayer with. And thus, what is a gain to you it will be beneficial to me as well, and therefore I must rejoice of that too, especially if I ascertain that my prayer has been listened too. But as one can see out of the following phrase, the author of the letter reckoned that he gained out of the benefit brought to the addressee by them who visit the addressee, for he asked those to pray for himself. Of this intertwining of everybody in prayer it consists the benefit of all.

meetings with the saints who come to visit you, ask them to pray for me as well, out of love. That's why I reckon that meeting people in the name of God it is a good thing; while also avoiding to meet people for the name of God it is a good thing[421]. May God keep you healthy.

206. (V. 138) The same one, after he cut off the meetings with many, he tries to meet a certain one. So, he asked the same Oldman: Because I like somebody and that one wants to meet me, should I meet you or not?

The answer of John: If you live somebody, what do you have against others? Why don't you meet all of them" Is there any reason for that? Take heed at what soul you are in, and if you want, you could meet that one, but while rebuking on yourself. Pray for me.

207. (V. 120) Of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Asking the Great Oldman to pray for him and asking about the consummate quietude (withdrawal).

The answer of Barsanuphius: Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the blessed and highest God, may give you power and may strengthen you for receiving His Holy Ghost, so that through His good dwelling Him to teach you about all things and Him to enlighten your hearts and Him to guide you into truth (Jn. 16: 13) in order I to see you flourishing as the palm trees in the Paradise of God and you to be like some olive trees full of fruits (Ps. 51: 7[422]) in the middle of the saints and "as a true whole fruiting vine" (Jer. 2: 21) in the godlike place. Mey the Lord make you worthy of drinking out of thy "wisdom spring" (Prov. 18: 4). This is for, as man as have drunk out of it, they have forgotten about themselves, by exiting whole out of

[421] When you meet other people inn order you to ask them to pray for you and for the people who are absent, or in order you to pray together with them, that is a good thing. But if you do not meet them, in order you to be able to pray to God in quietude, that is a good thing too.

[422] In KJB we have: Ps. 52: 8: "But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever."; in ROB we have: ps. 51: 7: "But I, as a fruiting olive tree in the house of God, I have hoped for the mercy of God, ever and forever and ever." (E. l. t.'s n.)

their former man[423]. And from the spring of the wisdom, they have been guided to another spring, that spring of the love that never falls (1 Cor. 13: 8). And elevated on this level they have achieved the non-strayed and unscattered measure, and reached to be whole in their mind and in their eyes and wholly alive and wholly luminous, and wholly consummate, and wholly gods[424]. Did the saints toil? Now they have been extolled, they have been glorified, they have been filled up with shininess. They have reached to life because they have died. They are gladdened and they gladden themselves[425]. They are gladdened in the unseparated Trinity and they gladden the powers from height[426]. You must wish to reach their level, you must ascend together with them, you must aspire to their faith, you must gain their humbleness, you must achieve their patience in all things, so that you will receive their inheritance. Keep their love unfallen, in order you to find in the untold goods "the things the

[423] That former man of the sins, he thinks too much at himself in egotistic sense. He who drinks out of the godlike spring of the true wisdom, he will forget about thinking at himself in this egotistic meaning, but he will discover his true self and the dependence of his self on God, so that he will place the accent not on his self but on God and all the other people loved by God. In this sense, such a man goes out of himself.

[424] The whole their being is understanding, the whole their being sees beyond the realities perceived with their senses, or they see through the realities perceived with their senses; the whole their being is alive, generous, joyful, not having anything dead in it; the whole their being is enlightened and it spreads around the light of the joy, for it is elevated on the level of the godhead according to grace.

They have removed through death the walls which separated them from the true life in communion with God and with their fellow humans. They have killed the dead life from within them in order to fill themselves up with the true life. The word from the text is taken from Paterikon (Abba Bessarion 11).

[425] They are gladdened by Christ and they gladden Christ, for they have reached the gladness through Christ. They are gladdened by Christ and they gladden other people. Out of the glad one is being spread gladness. And they who are dispassionate, who are elevated in the love too, they rejoice of the gladness of those ones, and that means that the gladness of those ones will pass to them too. You have to totally die to yourself in order you to be able to truly live out of God's life and out of others' lives which will be communicated to you after you have torn down the walls of your egotism. Your death out of generosity means exiting the prison of your egotism. We bear within us the death because of our egotism, right out of the seed of our parents whom we are born to. But we can transform that death in a death out of generosity. And that will pass us to life. In both cases we are born to die: us to die the willing death of the love for others, or us to die a death out of our egotism.

[426] The powers from height are not envious on the gladness reached by the saints. On the contrary, the powers from height rejoice themselves too of the saints' gladness, for having new companions in knowing the untold love of God and they increase that knowledge in communication. The glad singing of each one strengthens the common choir.

eye has never seen and the ear has never heard" and the followings (1 Cor. 2: 9).

As about quietude (withdrawal), you must live in ascesis for a little longer, and God will have mercy on you.

May God enlighten your heart in order you to understand these words. This is for these words are difficult to understand to them who haven't reached their measure. Forgive me and pray for me so that I won't remain below this height, as an unworthy who I am.

208. (V. 121) The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman, if the Great Oldman allows him or not to consummately withdraw himself into quietude.

The answer of Barsanuphius: I told you love, my beloved brother, about the quietude (withdrawal), that you must wait for now, and not because I wouldn't want you to enter the state of this measure, by any means! But by wanting I that and by praying God to bestow you that state in a great abundance. This is for my great joy is your progress, of all of you. And the gifts (the charismas) are given by God at the right times and He calls us and He helps us and He guards us. This is for it was said: "Not him who praises on himself he is also proven, but him who praises the Lord" (2 Cor. 10: 12). So, if you want to build up your house, you must prepare, before all, the necessary materials. Only after that the craftsman can come and build your house. And the material needed for such a building are: the strong faith in order to build up the walls, luminous windows able to let the sunlight enter that house and enlighten it, so that there won't be any darkened corner in that house. And the windows are the five senses upheld by the honored wooden cross of Christ, which bring the light of the thought (spiritual) sun of the righteousness, and they don't want to be within that house any darkness from the enemy who hates the good. Then you will need also a roof that to cover the house, "so that, during the day, the sun won't born you, neither the moon during the night" (Ps. 120: 6[427]). And the roof is the

[427] In KJB we have: Ps. 121: 6: "The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night."; in ROB we have: Ps. 120: 6: "During the day the sun won't burn you, neither the moon during night." (E. l. t.'s n.)

love for God, that love that "never falls" (1 Cor. 13: 8), and the roof cover the house and it doesn't allow the "sun to set over our anger" (Eph. 4: 26), so that we won't be blamed us on the day of the judgment and the Gehenna's fire won't burn us; neither the moon will testify about our idleness and carelessness from during night. Finally, that house must have a door allowing the man to enter it, and that door guards him who live inside that house. And by saying door, brother, I understand the spiritual door, or the Son of God Who said: "I am the door" (Jn. 10: 9). After you have prepared to yourself that house, so that there won't be anything unpleasant to Christ, the Son will come together with His blessed Father and with the Holy Ghost and They will make to Themselves and dwelling place within you (Jn. 14: 13) and They will teach you what the quietude in withdrawal is and your heart will enlighten within you with an untold joy. Amen.

209. (V. 122) Asking for prayer and to teaching, by the same one, form the same Great Oldman.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Our God Jesus Christ to enlighten the eyes of your heart, my beloves and all-desired son, to that to shine within them the light of the Holy and only-Mastering and of-One-Being and worshipped Trinity, in order you to be guided to understand His holy mysteries and you to rejoice eternally; in order you to exit Egypt, and you to separate the sea with your staff, and you to escape from the hands of the barbarian Pharaoh, and you to celebrate by bringing sacrifices to God[428]; so that you will be able to eat the Passover into holiness[429], and your lips to flourish like a palm tree through

[428] In any religion the celebration is united with the sacrifice. But in Christendom it is brought the highest sacrifice: the willing sacrifice of the Son of God as man, and united with Him the sacrifice of our own being as sign of obedience to God and of consummate love for God. This is the celebration of the praise brought to God for He bestowed us all the things and, above all, our existence; and it is the celebration of our elevation from the death maintains within us by our egotism, to that consummate life coming to us from the unimpeded – by our egotism – union with God into love.

[429] Our Passover, or our Paschal Lamb, the Lam Whom we cross from death to life through, He is Christ. BY eating Him, He will become our being that does this crossing, or the Passover, and this is for throughs sacrifice we will be sanctified, we will exist the egotism of our sins. This is our crossing or our Passover.

the holy and honored blood[430]; so that by girding up your girdle and by keeping the staff with clean hands, and by wearing footwear in your feet, you to unimpededly advance, and you to feed yourself with the mana from heavens mediated by the clouds with are together-servants with you[431]; so that your coat won't get worn out anymore (The Second Law 8: 4), neither the hairs of your head to grow anymore[432]; in order your heart to be cleaned up for receiving the law of its Lord and you to smash into pieces the cast calf from the middle of your people and the earth will swallow your enemies who resist you; in order you to defeat the emperors of the Amorites and God to consume the seven peoples from in front of you; so that you to inherit their land forever[433]; and you to cross River Jordan with the power of the godlike working of wonders (The Second Law 11: 31); and then you to conquer the stronghold of the palm trees (The Second Law 34: 3)[434]; and you to save Rahab, the prostitute who believed in God (Joshua 6: 23-25); and you to sow and to plant and to eat and to get satiated and to glorify God Who has given you this land; and there not to be within you another god. Finally, you to be saint to God and your country no longer be stormed by other nations, for you will be fearsome to them. And you to kill Goliath so that you will reign together with David and you will exist the former things by finding the new life. And you to believe Christ in order you to be crucified together with Him and you to die together with Him and you to be buried together with Him, so that you to rise full of shininess together with Him, and you to be elevated together with Him and you to

[430] After we eat Christ, our Passover, our lips will flourish like some palm trees, as a sign that we have crossed from death to life. We have received the blood of a new life, an imperishable life. This fact was imagined by Israelites after they ate their paschal lamb and after they had crossed to a free life through the sea split by Moses, and they reached an oasis where there were palm trees.

[431] The clouds are the ones mediating the light coming from Christ.

[432] The vestments of the cleanness no longer get worn out and they no longer bring you to death, as the vestments of the sin do. The hairs of the head will no longer grow up continuously so that they won't need to be cut. Everything is a sing of imperishable youth. The life of God and the live of the man into God doesn't get old, for it doesn't get closer to death, btu it is eternally young and it is ceaselessly in the fulness of the vigor.

[433] The land of the Kingdom of Heavens destined to all the angels, it has been passed from the fallen angels, by God, into the inheritance of the people who cross to the true life into God.

[434] The stronghold of the palm trees is the image of the city where there won't ever be death or oldening.

eternally live to ether with Him (Rom. 6: 6-8; Col. 2: 12)[435]. Therefore, you soften the wax, and the wax will become more pleasant to touch. This is for, when you will have softened the wax, you will find out in it's the meanings of the eternal life, int Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Regarding the brother living together with you, bear him according to your power. This is for the healthy one must endure the ill one, until God will do what is useful. "Rejoice into the Lord" (Phil. 3: 1).

210. (V. 123) The ask of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Holy Fathers, bless me with a spiritual blessing and sanctify the monastic hat and the monastic robe which I have sent to you, in order I to have then as cover into Christ Jesus our Lord, against all evil.

The answer of Barsanuphius: My beloved brother, if our Master Christ Who can do anything, the Lord of the heavens and of earth, He told him who got close to Him: "Be it to you according to your faith" (Mt. 9: 29), what could I tell you, because I am poor and deprived of everything? God of the blessing may bless you with the whole spiritual blessing, and with the whole grace of the righteousness; and to make you partaker to the shininess of the saints, and inheritor of the Kingdom, and liberated from the dishonorable passions[436] through the prayers and through the mediations of the saints. Amen. Regarding the things you are asking for, for you trust me, I will wear them for three days and I will send them back to you, when they will be sanctified by my encounter with God, through the prayers of the saints. I ask you to pray for me as well, when I will be in such an encounter[437].

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[435] The savior work of Christ it received through faith and it is that power which we too will be elevated by, together with Him, by bearing our cross and by resurrecting us together with Him. Our salvation isn't an exterior fact, but it is an internal growth. Our consummation is Christological.

[436] The Emperor is Master and not a servant. The slave of the passions cannot be inheritor of the supreme Kingdom. And the freedom from passion gives shininess, while the egotism makes you darkened.

[437] A subtle and delicate play of nuances: they will be sanctified in their encounter with God, but that will take place through the prayers of the saints. But also, him who asks for that blessing, he too is asked to pray.

211. (V. 139) A certain presbyter among the Fathers, after living in ascesis for a long time, in deserts, and then wanting to appease himself in a withdrawal in the monastery, he once asked the other Oldman how must him start his appeasement?

The answer of John: Joh the Baptist told to our Master Jesus Christ: "I need to be baptized by You, and You come to me?" (Mt. 3: 14). Still, your love has done good for teaching us through humbleness to get ashamed and to confess our passions. This is for doubtlessly: "the smaller one takes blessing from eth greater one" (Hebr. 7: 7). So, you are the one to heal me. For you are a presbyter, a spiritual priest of God, who is called to anoint with oil those who are ill and to heal them of their bodily illness, by uniting the anointing the forgiveness of their sins (Jas. 5: 14-15). So, I cannot advice the one who is superior to me, because I haven't been called to priesthood because of my unworthiness, I whose white flower of his hairs hasn't stopped my senses from my youth? If that man who asked me was like me, my impulse to much-speaking wouldn't let me stay peacefully and not to answer him. This is for I have an uncontrollable tongue. And I would tell him that a child advances from the small teachings to the big teachings. Shouldn't him answer that: "yes, it is so"? And everything I reckoned that I had to tell him, I would tell him. So, you too, stay withdrawn (appease yourself) for five days and meet others for two days. And if your sitting (withdrawal) is according to God, namely if you reach to know that what you search for by your sitting, you won't fall in the hands of the devil of the vain-glory. This is for he who knows what he has intended to do by coming into city, his heart will desire that and he won't deviate to other things. This is for he who searches will fall differently. Forgive me, Abba, for I do not have more to you to you. And pray for me, for the Lord. For I do not have either deeds or word.

212. (V. 140). The question of the same one towards the same Oldman: When I loose my body more that it needs, it won't feel well in its serving. But again, if I loose it less that it needs, I fear not to get my body tired too quickly. What should I do regarding this? And regarding the Holy Impartation, for I want to

be imparted daily, it is a burden if I ask for the Holy Impartation to be brought to me, the sinner, or must I descend to be imparted? But in this case, how could I not lose the appeasement of the state of withdrawal?[438]

The answer of John: I told you before, Abba, the words of John towards the Savior. But you have written me again, me who I am stupid and mindless. But if John didn't resist to the very end, who am I, for I am nothing, to reject your ask? So, I am telling you the truth that I and nothing and I do not nothing, but in order to obey you, I am going to tell you what I have within my heart. I cannot assure you that is so, but I am going to tell you what I can[439].

God doesn't ask the ill man for a bodily serving, but for a spiritual serving, namely for the prayer. This is for he says: "Pray incessantly" (1 Thes. 5: 17).

Regarding the body's diet, if the body cannot serve when taking more food, and when not taking you fear the helplessness, you will keep the middle: neither up, nor down. And thus, it will the Scripture be fulfilled, that says: "Do not deviate either to the right or to the left" Num. 20: 18). But give your body a little less than it needs, for this is the way of the Fathers: not to be either loaded or weakened in living.

And regarding the bringing of the Holy Impartation to you, when this is not contempt, but it is because of illness, it won't be towards damnation. This is for the chieftain of the doctors come Himself to them who are very tired and ill, as our Lord Jesus Christ came before to us who were sinners and feeling sick. Forgive me, Father, for by obeying you I have spoken I the worthless.

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[438] He who asked doubted about asking to be brought the Holy Impartation to his monastic cell. It seemed to him that asking to be brought up to him (or maybe his monastic cell was on a hill?), he would reckon himself superior to it. That's why he asks if he ought to leave his monastic cell and go to be given the Holy Impartation, or better said climbing to it, and thus to interrupt his withdrawal (appeasement).

[439] Another paradox: if I answer you ask for giving you and advice, I will be in danger to get haughty. On the other hand, I do not have the right to remain silent and so to disobey you because of being against in the danger of getting haughty. So, I prefer the risk of being tempted by pride by answering your ask that to reject it. And I will fight, by answering your ask, not to be overcome by pride. That's why, lo, I am telling you from the beginning, even before giving you the required advice, that I am nothing and I know nothing. But I am not assuring you that it is good that what I am going to tell you. But I am telling you what I have in my mind.

213. (V. 141) The question of the same one towards the same one: Because a widow whom injustice has been done to, she asked me to write to the governor, I have two thoughts related to that: one thought tells me that I have come here in order I to die to the world and, if I wrote I would transgress my obligation assumed by me to die to the world; the other thought tells me that if I didn't write, I would transgress the commandment telling us to help them in need. My beloved Father, tell me what should I do?

The answer of John: If you had been dead, would have any widow come to you for asking you to help her[440]? And if you helped that one and there came another one, if you overlooked the last one you would transgress the commandment. The dead doesn't take care of such things. Even if they speak against you, you won't let that bring any disturbance to you.

214. (V. 142) A brother living into monastery and serving an ill old man, he asked the Great Oldman about his thoughts.

The answer of Barsanuphius: You are mindless, and that's why your thoughts master upon you and especially your impulse of justifying yourself. The Lord wants you to have any man superior to you. So, show obedience to the old man in everything and do whatever he tells you to do, either regarding the food or the drink, or anything else. You will obey him even if that is a difficult thing to do, as Abba for advice, and anything he tells you to do you will do so[441]. Regarding the singing of psalms and regarding the taking of vigil, you will do what he tells you to do and that will be to you towards the salvation of your soul. And if he upsets you, you will endure that. This is for "he who endures to the very end, he will be saved" (Mt. 10: 22). Give thanks to God for everything. This is for "the giving of

[440] John seemed to know that him who sent him this question had helped before that another widow. Why wouldn't him help this time too, that widow asking for his help?

[441] It is about asking Serid for advice, for he was the abbot of that monastery; or it may be the old man whom he served to.

thanks mediated to God for helplessness"[442] (Les Sentences the Pères de désert, Nouvel Recueil, Solesmes, 1970, p. 151). Condemn yourself in all things as one who has committed sin and who has wronged and God won't judge you. Humble yourself in all things and you will find grace from God. If you learn these things, God will help you to find power. This is for this is the will of God, that "every man to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2: 4).

215. (V. 143) The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same one: Brother, do not rush yourself to discern among the thoughts coming to you, because this doesn't belong to your measure. And that's why they will disturb you as on somebody who doesn't know their craftsmanships. And when they trouble you, you must tell them: "I do not know who you are, God Who know that won't let you deceive me". And so, you throw your helplessness before God, saying: "Lord, I am in your hands, help me and escape me form them". And that thought tarrying within you and waging war to you, you must confess that to your Abba. And Abba will heal you through God.

Regarding the manual labor, do what you are told to do and you will be saved.

Regarding the psalms, do not stop leaning them. This is for you can do that. And strive to utter them. For they are much useful. And what exceeds your power, do not try to hear it. This is that, for now, you have teachings matching your measure.

216. (V. 144 a.) The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same one: Do not allow to be yourself mocked as a mindless one. Do not trust your enemies. This is because, if you sit carelessly and indolently, they will come again upon you. Take heed that the Lord said to the snake: It will guard your head and you will guard his heel" (Gen. 3: 15). Let the man not to sit carelessly to the very last of his breath. Guard yourself, brother, against anger, against vain-gloriousness, against sleeping, and against all the other passions, by knowing that the enemy doesn't sleep nor gets lazy.

[442] Giving thanks to God justifies you for your helplessness of doing more important deeds asked you by God. You must remain tied to God at least by thanking Him.

217. (V. 144 b) The answer of the same one towards the same one: Brother, if you want to be saved, you must earn humbleness and willing obedience. When you hear something from your old man, regardless what that would be, tell him humbly: pray for me, Father, for God to give me understanding and watchfulness in order I not to bother you again. Keep this and you will be saved.

218. (V. 145) The same brother falling ill, and suspecting that he is going to die, he humbly asked the same Great Oldman to pray for his sins to be forgiven and for him to have patience in illness to the end.

And the Oldman answered him this: Do not be sad, brother. This is for the sinless death is not an actual death, but it is a move from trouble to resting, form darkness to untold light and to eternal life. And God the Great Emperor will tell you: "Forgiven are your sins" (Lk. 7: 47-48), in the first place for the prayers and for the asks of the saints and for your faith in Him. And may Him give patience to you to the end.

219. (V. 146) The same one towards the same Great Oldman: Master and Father of mine, I am in God's hand and in your hands. Have mercy on me to the end and hurry up and untie me, and present me to my Master Christ, by leading me with your prayers and by accompanying me through the skies and on that path which I do not know.

The answer of Barsanuphius: I present you, brother, to God Who found us worthy to die for us, to the Master of the heavens and to the Master of everything that breaths, in order Him to quench your fear of dying and to make unimpeded the ascension of your soul and you to bow down daringly to the Holy Trinity, namely liberated, but with fear and with tremble

as the holy angels do[443]; and Him to rest you with His saints[444]. Go then, and pray for me[445].

220. (V. 147) Another brother by falling ill of pulmonary tuberculosis and by being in bid dangers, he asked the same Great Oldman to pray for him and to ask for the forgiveness of his sins.

The answer of the Great Oldman: Have no fear, brother, but your soul should rather rejoice and be glad into the Lord. And truly believe me that, lo, God has forgiven all your sins, as you have asked for, since your childhood until now. Blessed is God for He deigned to forgive all your sins. So, do not be sad. This is for you have not sin left within you. You still have a pain, but it will stop.

221. (V. 148) That one because of being even more burdened by his illness, some of his brothers asked the other

[443] You are liberated from the inferior impulse from within you and from the temptations of the evil ghosts, but you are fearful and shaken by the great glory of the Holy Trinity. Actually, these two feeling are one. Only by being shaken by the glory of the endless love of the Holy Trinity for you, you can be free and able to answer that with your love. The unlimited love shows to you it makes you tremble, but it also makes you free and it gives you the power you to answer with love at your turn. This fear is not only of death. In the love shown to you, you are free and trembling; that love fills you up with daring, but in the same time it makes you bow down with fear and tremble. One cannot show a true love, even for a man, except in freedom, and in the love exercised by somebody else upon you, you won't feel any pressure. But that love overwhelms you, in the same time.

And he who is united with God in such a love, and in the same time he is united with you too, he will bring you, through his love, to God. He has this force. He doesn't forsake you for he doesn't forsake either God Who gives him this power. This is shown in his prayer to God, but this is for you. He is together with you in front of God. He introduces you, and he recommends you to God.

[444] You are resting yourself into the love from God of all the troubles and worries about yourself. But you are being rested also by the love of the saints who are united with God and with you. Thus, one reaches the full communion of the love and of the resting produced by that love. In God you will no longer pricked by somebody's envy, you will no longer be upset by somebody's will to master you, to take it in front of you.

[445] Barsanuphius as the one praying to God, he presents to God him whom Barsanuphius prays for, but that one too, when brought in front of God is asked to present Barsanuphius to God, at his turn, for the fact that Barsanuphius did him such a great good of bringing him in front of God. Barsanuphius doesn't want to reckon himself superior to him whom he prays for.

Oldman for explaining them the answer of Barsanuphius: did he spoke about life or about death?

The answer of John: It is about death. But the Great Oldman can ask life for that brother, if God will let him know about that.

222. (V. 149) By hearing that, the brothers asked the Great Oldman to ask God for giving life to that ill brother.

The answer of Barsanuphius: My kind and merciful God may fill you up again and again with the joy of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Regarding your brother, it suffices him what he has been found worthy of receiving. This is for he has suddenly become rich out of poor and free man out of slave. Blessed is God Who has wanted to receive my ask. But you must tell nothing to the brother, in order you to avoid saddening him up, but keep your silence upon this mystery. This is for that what is coming to him it won't be death but it will be moving from death to eternal life and from torment to resting.

223. (V. 150) Being very hard to that brother and suffering him great pains, the brothers asked the same Great Oldman to pray God to have mercy on that brother more quickly[446].

The answer of the Great Oldman: He has remained into pain for the prayer done for him not to remain by itself[447]. God

[446] In the Volos Edition: "This brother seems to be that simple brother and all-tried worker of the obedience, called Dositheos, whom Abba Dorotheos write about in his first Word. This is for Dorotheos had that brother as helper in the monastery's infirmary, there where Barsanuphius was living too, being at that time doctor of the infirmary. This is because Dositheos too got ill with pulmonary tuberculosis, as Dorotheos wrote". It is about Dositheos also in the following three letters and two footnotes.

[447] The prayer done for another must not remain by itself. The fire becomes stronger when fueled with many coals. The prayer is stronger when belonging to many. The congregationalism or the communion gives power to prayer. The common prayer strengthens the congregationalism or the communion. He who prays increases in himself when knowing that his prayer is accompanied by the prayers of many. The flight towards God is nimbler when done by many, like the bords raise higher into flight when flying into a flock. In the warmth communicated to one another by them who pray, it is more strongly felt the presence of God. Their borders are being removed, but the warmth of the communion doesn't abolish

have been doing to him and God is going to him that what is useful to him, by the prayers of the saints[448]. Amen. And after this answer, that brother dies peacefully.

224. Somebody asked Abba John about something. And by receiving an answer, he sent a question to Abba Barsanuphius on the same subject, but without confessing that he has already asked the other Oldman on the same subject.

And the Great Oldman answered him: "Do that what brother John told you to do". And after a while the same brother did the same thing. And Barsanuphius answered him: "It is enough to you know. Barsanuphius's God and John's God is One". And that brother stopped asking both of them upon the same subjects, being satisfied with the answer of one of them[449].

225. A brother asked the Great Oldman: Tell me, Father, what should I do because of the disturbance I suffer from the thoughts of my heart? Must I totally cut off the wine? Must I sleep in a sitting position? And, pray for the illness of my eye. Must I show it to the doctor? And I pray you to ask God for giving me a little progress. And pray God for I no longer part with your holy traces.

Answer: Brother, you are asking my fewness for hearing the things regarding your thoughts. Haven't you been satisfied with the things heard by you from brother John? You suffer these disturbances because you have a frivolous heart. And, according to Lord's word: "All things are possible to him who believes" (Mk. 9: 23). So, where is your faith at? Regarding the wine, you must not cut it off totally, but you must use less of it. And the sleeping in a sited position will finally lead to

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them as persons, but each of them if being filled up with the common warmth. The more somebody is in pain, the more he prays for himself.

[448] In the Volos Edition, the footnote: "Abba Dorotheos in his first word adds that the Great Barsanuphius told towards Abba Dositheos these things too: "God in peace, my child, show yourself to the Holy Trinity and mediate for us".

[449] Barsanuphius does not deny that in the first answer there was also the advice of Abba John. This is for the brother himself asked for an answer from both of them.

humbleness. But surrender yourself to God, into His fear. Regarding your eye, do not fear. For you have God Who enlightens you. If it happens that you find somebody skillful and you show him your eyer, you won't commit sin. This is for this too is humbleness.

These things have been dictated by me, but they have been written by my son Serid. And if you do not fight to make useless these words of mine, uttered through God, I will pray God to bring you to a bigger progress and not to separate you from us either in this age or in the age to come. Get wise regarding the devils which teach you offensive things, and so you will always attract your soul and your thoughts towards good. Do not agree any covenant with the devils, because they are dreadful and of a foreign nation. And so, you will inherit the land of the Israelites into our Lord Jesus Christ. Who it is due the glory forever. Amen.

226. The question of the same one towards the same one: I pray you, Father, tell me if the first answer was from you. I ask you this because my thought tells me that it could be Abba who answered on behalf of you. And tell me how can be healed the passions? Give ne commandment regarding the salvation of my soul. And ask for me the forgiveness of my sins. And if it is good, as my thought tells me, let me be appointed to the kitchen definitively.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Listen to me, Son! To every passion there is a medicine and to every sin there is a repentance. If you are totally faithless, as you said, and if you want the be healed of your faithlessness, the medicine for that it will be the faith. You must believe, without doubting yourself at all, into the Good One[450]. And if you persevere to stay into faith, you will have to take heed at not falling off that happiness which it was told about: "Blessed are them who haven't seen

[450] "το αγαπώ" can also be translated as: into the Good One, or in good. Besides, the good is not outside the person. Only the person can be good. And the good by excellence cannot be but a supreme Person or God. He who believes in good, he actually believes in a supreme Person as support of the good. And he who believes in good, he strives to progress himself in good. And this means to give joy to other Persons. Into the consummate good which we want to enter, let's believe that in it is implied our eternal existence for we advance into God.

but they believed" (Jn. 20: 29). This is for it was written: "Believe into light so that you be sons of the light" (Jn. 12: 36).

Lo, I have sent you the second answer, because of you not believing the first one. If you welcomed a prophet in name of prophet (as prophet) you would take a prophet payment (Mt. 20: 41), namely, even if the fist answer was not from me but you received it as from me, you would take that answer according to your faith. This is for believer is him who says: "May him give you according to your heart" (Ps. 19: 5[451]). Your saying: "I want to get strengthened form you and form Abba, it has brought you the first answer[452]. Why than have you got closer to the who tempted the Lord by telling Him: "Show us a sign" and who were rejected by the Lord as tempters, for He said: "They won't be given a sign" (Mt. 12: 38-39)? And why haven't you got closer to Ahaz, who after being ordered to ask for a sign, he didn't want to do that, but he said: "I won't ask for a sign, neither will I tempt the Lord" (Isa. 7: 12)?

If you, by hearing, you simply believed, you would benefit much. But because of you not fighting again against your faithlessness[453], I have asked Abba to stay at your door and to read with a loud voice the words I have written to you, in order the devil to get ashamed. This is for, if Abba reads this while shouting out, how will be the devil able any longer to wage war to you so that you to say: "I cannot hear that"? And if you hear those words, but somebody else wrote those as you wanted, how could I not expose that one[454]? If you reckoned me foreseer and knower of the things which are done according to God's

[451] In KJB we have: Ps. 20: 5: "We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners: the Lord fulfil all thy petitions."; in ROB we have: Ps. 19: 5: "We will rejoice of your salvation and for the name of our God we will be glorified. May the Lord fulfill all your asks." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[452] Here it seems that Barsanuphius - who were saddened because of not being the brother satisfied with the answer he received form Abba John – tells to that brother: "Believe Abba John, who is good", so "believe to the good man". The good man doesn't want to disappoint you, but the good man takes you on the path of his kindness, towards God Who is All-Good.

[453] He didn't fight his faithlessness when he willingly started to ask questions to both of them, because of not being him satisfied with the answer of only one of them.

[454] Because the brother doubted about the fact that the words from the first letter had been sent you by Barsanuphius, Barsanuphius made Abba Serid, whom he dictated the answer for that brother, to read that word with loud voice at the door of that brother's monastic cell, so that that brother by hearing those words he still hadn't admitted that those words were from Barsanuphius himself, the brother could have told that publicly; and in case that brother hadn't said anything, that would have been the public admission that those words belonged to Barsanuphius and that brother no longer be warred by devils to doubt that.

will, you must reckon that nobody dares to change my word without me knowing it. But I have been hiddenly diminished by the enemy in front of you, by presenting me to your eyes as I am knowing anything from before.

Therefore, if you want from me any commandment towards your salvation and life, you must achieve consummate humbleness and obedience in all things. This is for these ones are those which uproot all the passions and they plant all the goods (virtues). And do not hesitate in listening the Abbas' teachings. This is because of being this the seed of the enemy. And if you put in work the whole your power in receiving and keeping those teachings, I hope through Christ Who has embodied Himself and Who was crucified for saving the sinners, that you won't be late to bring beautiful and good fruits.

Regarding the sines which you tell me about that you have committed those, if you keep your commandments into Christ Jesus, you will doubtlessly believe that the Lord has forgiven your sins and that you are like a newborn out of God, through repentance.

And regarding the passions, you don't need me to write about each of the passions. This is for, by a sole word, I have shown you the medicine against your passions. This is for the Lord says: "I will dwell within the humble ones" (2 Cor. 6: 16). Do you reckon that, by any means, it can be live something out of the enemy's evilness there where it sees the lord dwelling? You must understand that the lawless one cannot show himself in the palaces of the governors.

Regarding the kitchen, you must not desire to keep that position permanently. This is because that will cause increasingly more envy. But when you are ordered to, you must not hesitate or oppose, but you must do with the whole your heart whatever you are asked to do. This is for, out of that you will gain grace.

And about those two passions, namely the forgetfulness and the carelessness, ask zealously, brother, and work even more zealously, and do not do what you have done in the case of the previous questions, which you have given to the forgetfulness and to its sister the carelessness, not renew your

spiritual questions through the grace of the Holy Trinity[455]. And warm up your heart into the fear of God[456], and so your heart will be wakened up from the spiritual sleep of the two mentioned passions. This is for, by being your heart warmed up, you heart will be kindled for desiring the future goods. Let your cogitation move around these ones. And this care will banish away from you're your bodily sleep too. Then you will say like David: "In my cogitation there will be kindled a fire" (Ps. 38: 4[457])[458]. So, you have asked about two passions and you have heard, briefly, about all the passions. The passions are like some twigs which are burnt by the spiritual fire. This is for, in order I to speak about the spiritual living, if the watchfulness of the leading mind is unable to, the man vainly cogitates. Love the ascesis and cogitate at these and you will find the imperial path and you will walk fearlessly into the Lord.

I have asked you to do these and, believe me when I am telling you, that if I see your zeal into God, I will ceaselessly pray God in order Him to save you from death and God to bestow you the eternal life into Christ Jesus our Lord Who to be the glory forever. Amen.

227. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Abba, I am terrified at the thought telling me: "You ask, but you do not do. Won't you be cursed by the Oldman?" Therefore, pray for me so that God to bestow me to understand the things written to me by you, and I to accomplish those things.

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[455] The questions show, at their turn, a discontent of the man with the state which he is in, and therefore a will for crossing over that state, of getting out of that state. It is a worrying about life, and not a resignation to the sinful insensitiveness.

[456] Th fear of God produces the warmth of the zeal for fulfill God's will, in order you no longer to allow yourself to be mastered by your passionate habits. So, the fear of God brings a strength.

[457] In KJB we have: Ps. 39: 3: "My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned:"; in ROB we have: Ps. 38: 4: "My heart has got hot within men and into my thought there will be kindled a fire." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[458] That cogitation which the man is preoccupied though, with his straightening, that is not a cold cogitation. That is a cogitation which the man puts within the care for himself, the care for not losing but for gaining the eternal life. Besides, no cogitation preoccupied with gaining and maintaining another's attention upon you, it won't be a cold cogitation. A cold cogitation means that cogitation occupying itself with things which do not touch the life of own person. Any other cogitation is an existential cogitation.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Son, if somebody listens to something and he does that something, he does hat for himself and he is the one to benefit of that. But because you have said that you are terrified at the thought lest I could curse you, I am asking you: how can him who fears God, to curse somebody, while the Lord says: "Bless and do not curse" (Rom. 12: 14). But brother, take heed at the fact that the demons want to draw your attention upon useless things: sleeping in a sited position, not to use a pillow, or which are the dill or the mint or the cumin (Mt. 23" 23), so that you to forsake the important things of the law consisting of: quenching out your anger, withering out your wrath, and of being you obedient in all things. And these ones are sown within you by the enemy so that to weaken down your body and you to reach the passion and so you to wants soft mattresses and diverse foods. But be you satisfied with a sole pillow and stretch yourself on your ben with the fear of God[459]. And in order you to understand the things told you by me, pray God and God will give you understanding. This is for God is the Giver of any good thing. Trust the fact that if you put all your power in doing the things which you have heard form me, I will multiply my power within you, so that you to receive help from God. Fill up your plate with spiritual foods[460], which are: the faith, the hope, and the love. This is for him who has these ones he is being feasting with the Kingdom. To God belongs the glory forever. Amen.

228. The question of the same one towards the same one: Please, Father, because I read in Greek and I cannot understand what they say, please pray God to give me understanding in reading. And tell me if I must learn the psalms in Greek[461].

The answer of Barsanuphius: Regarding the reading in Greek, if we search by the help of God and with humbleness the things beneficial to our soul, God will give us understanding.

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[459] Barsanuphius is in favor of a moderate bodily ascesis. To him is important the cleaning of the souly passions and the achieving of the virtues: the humbleness, the kindness, the patience in reproaches, and the prayer.

[460] In the Volos Edition, at footnote: "Can you see the wisdom of the saint? – because this brother was a cook of the monastery, he gives him an example of those of the kitchen".

[461] One can clearly see that in Gaza the Fathers were using the Scripture of the Old Testament in the Greek translation of the Septuagint, as everywhere else in the Byzantine Empire.

And if this is a gift from God, it will obviously be towards the salvation of our soul. This is for most of the books are written in Greek. And if you make effort to learn the psalms in Greek, that will be helpful to you at readings in Grek. But either you read or you learn the psalms by heart, you must ceaselessly remember God Who says: "Learn from Me that I am gentle and humble in MY heart and you will find resting to your souls" (Mt. 11: 29). Understand what I am saying to you, and if you make efforts you ascesis will find grace towards the eternal life into Christ Jesus our Lord Who to be the glory forever. Amen.

229. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: I pray you, Father, forgive me for the Lord, because the thought of the blasphemy has taken me into mastery. And, pray for me in order I to be corrected.

The answer of Barsanuphius: If I could cover this in tears and so to send it to you who are tormenting on yourself, it would be useful to you. But what can I do to that man who hasn't prepared the soil of his heart in order to receive the words sown by me through my written answers, in order that man's soul to be brought back from his oldened state to the renewal of the eternal life? This is for, if you received my words with assertiveness, you would taste out of them that's sweetness that sweetens the soul and that banishes away the awful bitterness sown within you by the devils[462]. But the devil of the defamation has been waging war to you for a long time, him who destroys the souls who welcome him. Examine and see that, even without finding any motif worthy to be taken in account, that devil has caught you in his bringer-of-death trap[463]. But may my God not to give him the power to fulfill his

[462] The temptations sown by the devils urge us to sins which seem sweet in the beginning, but then they leave a bitterness that becomes insupportable by being developed in passions. The good man has a sweetness within himself and he spread that sweetness around him too. On the opposite, in the passionate man there is a settled a slag of bitterness that is being spread around him by his darkened face. The good man sweetens all people around on the measure of his kindness. The evil man bitters up and agitates all people around him. Both the kindness and the evilness have a radiating force. From here we can see that when somebody has become evil without being submitted to an evil influence matching his evilness, he ought to have received this influence form unseen evil beings.

[463] Somebody can be seen defaming without motif the things told him about God. There is the demon doing that through than man because that man doesn't resist the demon. That man's

wish with you. This is because, if we lose our hope, God will always be close to us to receive our repentance. But if we lose our trust in ourselves[464], we will be condemned and having the blood upon our heads[465].

Therefore, wake yourself up from the straying that blinds you up and take again under control your senses which have been enslaved by the enemy[466], pulling him away from the teachings given you by Christ through me, which ordered you in the first place you to quench the anger and the wrath from within you, because of knowing that those take the man towards perdition by defamation. Then achieve the humbleness, which the devils are burnt in; the obedience that brings the Son of God to dwell within man[467]; the faith that saves the man; the hope that doesn't shame up; the love that doesn't allow the man

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self has surrendered himself to the demon. The demon is the defamer, but the ones whom the demon defames thought is guilty too, because of surrendering his self to the demon. Or, the self of that man has been filled up with the demon's self, and that man thinks he is the one working. Still, that man's self is partaker to the demon's work.

[464] If we do not lose our hope and if we seriously want us to be escaped from the devil's trap, God will help us. Only when we resign ourselves thinking that we no longer can seriously want to escape, then God won't be ablet to help as either.

[465] The Son of God made Himself man in order to become our Brother and therefore to makes us too, together with Himself, sons of the Heavenly Father. But this adoption is not a simple juridical fact. In order us to become together-sons, with the Son, of the heavenly Father, we must impropriate His obedient love of Son of the Heavenly Father. And we can achieve this feeling only by Him dwelling within us with His feeling as Son. This too is a replacement, or better said a reciprocal interiorization of selves. If him whom the devil dwell within, he impropriates the blasphemy of the devil against God, by getting demonized, him whom the Son of the Father dwells in, he will impropriate the filial feeling of the Son. We impropriate the feeling of the Son by loving obedience. We impropriate the blasphemy of the devil by full of hatred and of despise rebellion.

[466] As the enemy has become master upon your will, he also has become master upon your senses. Your senses are no longer used by your own self but they are used by the enemy's self that is placed within your own self, though your own self too is partaker to the works of the enemy's self which are done through your senses. It is a partial replacement of selves that is, in the same time, an accompanying between them, thought, on occasion, you realize that another self is working within you. It is about some sort of schizophrenia.

[467] The Son of God made Himself man in order Him to make Himself Brother to us and so, Him to make us together with Him sons of the Heavenly Father. But this adoption isn't a mere juridical fact. In order us to become together-sons with the Son of the Heavenly Father, we must impropriate too Christ's obedient love as Son for the Heavenly Father. And we can achieve this feeling only by dwelling Him within us, with His love as Son. This too is a replacement, or better said a reciprocal interiority of selves. While him whom the devils dwells within, he impropriates the devil's blasphemy against God, by demonization, him whom the Son of God dwell within, he will impropriate the filial feeling. WE impropriate the feeling of the Son through loving obedience, while we impropriate the blasphemy of the devil through the full of hatred rebellion, or by contempt.

to fall from God. This is because you, instead of taking care of these ones, you have rather chosen to you the opposite ones: the anger and the wrath, and the total perdition that is the blasphemy. And if you, by hearing these things from me, you will do everything you can in order to detach yourself from these passions and to gain those goods (virtues), I too will do for you tenfold that I can, so that you will no longer shame up my grey hair. Therefore, for the sake of God's kindness, so that you to find out how good He is, strive for correcting yourself. And because we have the commandment to forgive (Lk. 6: 31, 37)[468], may your past sins be forgiven. Repent for forty days for your past sins[469], by making three prostrations (daily) and saying: "Forgive me, for I have blasphemed against You my God", and you will confess to Him in your blasphemer body, for three times a day, saying: "Glory to You, my God, blessed are You forever. Amen". And to not fall again into these "let something even worse to happen to you" (Jn. 5: 19). This is for, form the callousness of your heart you have come to me, and from your anger you have come to willingly retaining yourself from receiving the Holy Impartation. And once you have been totally taken away by this impulse, you have fallen into the precipice of the blasphemy[470]. And if the hand of the loving-of-people God and the prayers of the saints didn't take it ahead, your soul

[468] He who doesn't forgive, he preserves within himself a pride that petrifies. He won't become humanized, he won't achieve the communication from him to the ones who has to be forgiven, and outside that he will lose his condition as man. So, he who doesn't forgive, he won't enter the Kingdom of Love of that humanity that has got rid of rigidity. That's why in this writing the authors ask us so much to forgive, and they place at the end of each of his "Letter" the ask for the addressees to forgive them. When you ask somebody for forgiveness, you soften him up as much as you got softened by forgiving him. You help that one to get out of his rigidity as yourself do too. By forgiving him, you help him to ascend, together with you, into the Kingdom of God. This is for, when the people meet by forgiving one another, there will be God too, for God is the spring of the forgiveness, for God is the spring of the love that wants to comprise everyone in it, and God is the source of our power for humanizing ourselves. There you will feel Him too as forgiver. This truly is God's almightiness.

[469] This number represents the endless perseverance in making yourself kinder, it represents the power of creating your habituation into good.

[470] This is an exact presentation of the stages of the falling from faith, and implicitly from the authentic humane that admits his smallness but he also desires to stay in communion with God as source of the endless loving power: a) the callousness, or some sort of habituation to indifference, to insensitiveness, that still not is an impulse for resistance; b) the anger towards what you are required in the relations with others; c) the willing retainment from receiving the Holy Impartation, and therefore from the communion with the others into faith; d) the justification of your sinful attitude through the blasphemy expressed against God and against the faith in God.

would be thrown into the perdition of the desperation. Now, God tell you through me who am the all-unimportant one: "You have sinned, do not sin anymore" (Sirach 21: 1[471]). But you too must pray for your previous sins, for merciful if God and, if we too want, God will forgive our sins[472]. IN this, you must remember that "much can the working prayer of the righteous" (Jas. 5: 16). If you like (what I am telling you), do it. If not, forgive me for everything[473].

230. The same brother, asking for forgiveness, the Great Oldman answered him immediately:

Our death and our life are in our hands. If we no longer commit the previous sins, that will be a sign that we will have received from God the forgiveness for those sins, due to the fact that we no longer wobble[474]. Therefore, my brother, you must stand steadfastly, in order not to be fulfilled concerning you too, the word: "Lo, you have been made whole, since now do not commit sin lest something worse will happen to you" (Jn. 5: 14). Run aways form disobedience, remove your faithlessness from yourself, estrange yourself from despair and attach yourself to

[471] In KJB this book *The Wisdom of Joshua, the Son of Sirach* is not given. The interested reader can download it for free, from www.academia.edu, together with the other thirteen books, grouped under the title: *Bible Missing Texts*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[472] If we want, namely if we ask God to forgive us, God will forgive us. Asking for forgiveness means getting humble, means getting your heart softened. That is not a commanding will maintain the callousness, but there will be a praying will that is softening us by humbleness, and that brings us in state of communion and therefore a state of forsaking the egotism manifested through pride.

[473] This is a last attempt to soften the soul of the addressee who still could remain callous by not wanting to accomplish the things recommended to him. But the saint asks him for forgiveness in the negative case too, and by doing so the saint attempted again to soften the sinner. And in the following letter we are going to see that the saint succeeded in doing that, and the sinner too asked for forgiveness. Even if the saints didn't do anything wrong to that one, by asking for forgiveness the saints gave him an example of humbleness, one that could soften the pride of the sinner. And by praying to him who could stubbornly remained into pride, himself the saints increased in humbleness.

[474] The forgiveness from God comes like a power that helps us to no longer commit sins. And by no longer committing sins we will show that we will have surpassed the state of sinfulness. The sin buds out of sin, the good buds out of good. When we no longer work contrary to God that means that somehow, we have got united with God, so that we feel the sweetness of the communion with God, and that sweetness has taken us out from hesitation in what regards fulfilling God's will.

God, by loving, by believing, by hoping. And you will have eternal live into Him. Amen.

231. The ask of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Father, pray for me, in order I to be defended against the night hallucinations. And if possible, make me worthy to come and bow down before you and listen to your holy voice. I am asking for that because I believe that, if I was granted that, I would be given much defense out of that.

Answer: The Scripture says that "he who is faithful in little, he is faithful in much too" (Lk. 16: 10). If you believed my word, you would believe me as I am present[475]. That's why the Lord blessed them who didn't see by they believed (Jn. 20: 29). And I have written you foe many times about disobedience and anger and callousness. But I am seeing that you haven't at all taken my words into account. But, because I owe you to give you everything I have, according to the Scripture that says: "Give to anybody who asks" (Mt. 5: 42), I am telling you too: achieve humbleness, and obedience, and hope, and I will defend you to God against your sins. But you must find out also that, that if you do not humble yourself, you won't obey; and if you do not obey, you won't love. And if you don't love, you won't believe and you won't hope for[476]. So, if you strive yourself to have these, I will reckon all your sins as mine. And if you reckon yourself as a lepper, I believe that you too will hear form

[475] Namely, if you do not believe my words written to you by me, you won't believe me even I will have met you.

[476] The order of the virtues can start with a virtue or with another: first the faith, then the hope, and then the love, but also inversely: first the love, then the faith and then the hope. Actually, in each virtue are present all the other virtues. You cannot believe in the Christian God without loving Him. This is for you believe after finding out His love-deeds for you. But this wakes up your love too. And once loving Him, you will believe that He will give you all the things which He promised us and which He proved about that He wants to accomplish them for us. Especially on the higher stages of the knowledge about God there is, on the first plan, the love. And you are convinced or you believe that out of the love of God all the untold goods will come to you. But, together with the love, there is the humbleness and the obedience. You love for you obey and believe, but you also obey and believe for you love too. Between obedience and love there is no contradiction when it comes about the relation of God with the loving subject. You will joyfully obey and believe him whom you love and who loves you. You are happy to obey him. That is not an obedience born out of fear, but that is an obedience full of love. It is an internal impulse, a free one, an energetic one, an impulse to obey and to believe.

our Savior the word: "I want, you be clean" (Mt. 8: 3). And if you reckon yourself as a sinner, you will hear: "Forgiven are your many sins" (Lk. 7: 47-48). And if you reckon yourself as blind, you will find your sight according to your faith (Mt. 9: 29). I wrote you these things before too. But you were asleep. Guar your mouth not to fall again into the dreadful blasphemy. This is because, when your soul reached to blasphemy, I was sweating to make God merciful to you, so that you to escape from it. And if you take heed at guarding what I have told you, with the whole your soul, my sayings will guard you not only against the night-hallucinations but also against all the plots of the enemy, through Christ Who helps you. Amen.

232. Of the same towards the same one: Have mercy on me, Master, and tell me how can I be saved during this time because the thought of the fear has ascended into my heart[477]*. What do you command me to do?*

Answer: The man will be saved at any time by the grace of God, if the man can cut off his will in all things, and if the man can have a humble heart and if the man has always hid death before his eyes. In this case, wherever the man is, the fear won't take him into mastery. This is for a man kike this he has forgotten the things from behind and he is stretching himself towards the things from ahead him (Phil. 3: 13)[478]. You too do this and be worriless; for you will be saved.

233. A younger brother, having faith in the same brother, he visited him invoking a souly benefit reason. And that younger brother gradually started to fulfill his needs like a servant. And the brother, because of not understanding what was happening, he didn't ask the Great Oldman about that. But the Great

[477] The "thought" (λογισμος), in all the spiritual writings of the Fathers, as also in the Holy Scripture, it has not theoretical meaning here, but it is a thought full of feeling, an existential thought. On the plan of the relation with God, but also on the plan of the concrete relation with the people, are not moving within us either purely theoretical meanings or feelings having no meanings. The fear is a sentiment too, but it is also a thought.

[478] That one is no longer mastered by fear, for he no longer thinks at his sinful past. He is always preoccupied with the good which he wants to do it even more, and that stays ahead him.

Oldman, by knowing by the gift of God, as a foreseer, what it was happening, he wrote the following things to that brother:

The advice from Barsanuphius: Brother, God through the mediation of the saints and of your Abba, He forgave your first sins committed with the lenience of God (Rom. 3: 26), in order the fruits of the righteousness to be shown, so that in your case the Scripture to be fulfilled, that says: "There where the sin was multiplied, there the grace was abundant" (Rom. 5: 20)[479].

Why, therefore, you are again urging the fire to come into your forest? This is because the devils do not allow you to see that until they will have taken you in their hands and until they will have done their will with you. But in order you to see that this thing is not beneficial to you, but it is dangerous to you, take heed at the fact that by this I am rightly asking you to understand the advice of the Apostle who says: "You who teach another, why don't you teach on yourself?" (Rom. 2: 21)[480].

Listen to me, brother! Are you paralyzed to that you want to be helped by another? Don't you realize that that is towards condemnation, especially for a young man who can serve somebody else? Believe me that I, until I haven't received annunciation from God to appease myself into withdrawal, I was helping myself even in time of illness, by preparing a little food to myself and by starting up a fire. Stop doing that what you are doing, or you will die sinfully. And if you need something, do not speak about that more than necessary. This is because, he who hasn't built up his monastic cell, how will be him able to build up the monastic cell of another? Don't you know that the Lor said: "The Son of man hasn't come to be served, but to serve" (Mt. 20: 28)? Do not allow to be yourself deviated form these, of else "your blood will be upon you" (3 Kings[481] 2: 38)[482]. Tell humbly the truth them who ask you

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[479] The purpose of the demons is that of destroying you by temptations and sins. But God brings His work which He bring you through to the good target aimed by Him, by overwhelming the evil work of those ones.

[480] God allows the believers to be tempted by demons not only for their freedom, but also in order they to taste the bitterness coming out of the desolation of their egotistic and isolated life, they to turn themselves back to God, and by being them forgiven by God and filled up with His kindness, to be shown how superior is the life into God in comparison to the void lived while estranged from God.

[481] In KJB we have: 1 Kings. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[482] Yourself will be guilty of your death. The Jew told Pilate: "His blood upon us", and so they took the guilt for Jesus's death upon themselves. It will be held accountable for

something: "Forgive me, for I am straying". I have asked and I have found out that a young man won't beneficial to another young man even if watering him with the knowledge of the entire Scripture. So, if you put in work the whole your power, I too will put a word for you to God, for you won't be erased from my heart. But I am using my power praying God to get you out from the scary darkness to the untold light, and from the straying of the devils to the knowledge of Christ, and from the second death caused by sin[483] to the eternal life. If you want to be saved, you won't despise what I have told you. Be it I to see you toiling into the vineyard of our Master Jesus Christ: thirty, sixty, one hundred, towards the glory of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

234. The ask of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Forgive me, Father, for the Lord, because unknowingly I have been mocked. And pray for me so that I will be able to set a new beginning.

The answer of Barsanuphius: We know, brother, that when some people drew near to Master Christ into true repentance, they received the forgiveness of their sins. He told so to the sinner: "Your sins be forgiven" (Lk. 7: 47-48). Therefore, I too am telling you that if you do, according to your power, the things said to you by me, you too will be given the mercy of Him Who had mercy on David and Who forgave the sinner. And by saying: "I want to set a beginning", you have made me too to rejoice. But the beginning is the humbleness and the fear of God. This is "for the fear of God is the beginning of the wisdom" (Ps. 110: 10[484]). But what is the beginning of the wisdom if not the stopping from all the things unpleasant to God. And who can one stop himself from doing those, if not by

somebody's death that one whom the blood of his victim will be seen upon. The shed blood of the victim will burden the killer. The death of the victim will be projected like a shadow over the killer, for it is present as a reproach in his conscience. And, likewise is guilty that one who kills himself.

[483] The first death is a consequence of the sin from before Baptism, or from before knowing Christ; the second death is a consequence of the sins form after Baptism.

[484] In KJB we have: Ps. 111: 10: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever."; in ROB we have: Ps. 110: 10: "The beginning of the wisdom is the fear of the Lord; a good understanding it is to them who do it. His praise remains forever and ever." (E. l. t.'s n.)

avoiding to do anything without asking about it and without being advised about it, or by stopping himself from speaking about any undue things? And then to reckon himself as crazy and stupid and being nothing. I am not telling you these, brother, as one who would be righteous. God know this. But if you believe, the Lord will do according to your will. This is for it was written: "Much can the working prayer of the righteous" (Jas. 5: 16). So, you do according to your power so that you to put into your purse those one hundred dinars, and I will put in there my ten thousand talents (Mt. 18: 24-28)[485]. And do not overlook these, lest otherwise a great grief to some upon you. But you will always think at them and guard them. And I believe that your toil won't be in vain (1 Thes. 3: 5). If you guard the pearl, you will get rich through into Christ Jesus our Lord Whom it is due the glory forever. Amen.

235. Of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: I am troubled by the fact that Abba respects other brothers more, and I am offended by that so much that I am warred by the temptation to hate him. Pray for me and show me what I should do.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, you tempt on yourself. Don't you know that "each one is tempted by his lust as by a witchcraft" (Jas. 1: 14)[486]? Take heed at the fact that the devil hurries up to shake you form the advice given you by me. May God not give him room. This is for God told peter: "Behold,

[485] Barsanuphius tells to the addressee: Pay me that one hundred dinars you owe me, or fulfill the few advices I am giving to you, and I will pay to the Lord the ten thousand talents I owe Him for you. The more one is conscious, the more he will be more responsible for others. This is because that one who owed to the Master in the Gospel ten thousand talents, he owed those as one who was responsible for the work of his subordinates. This is a high understanding the responsibility. The differences among people are not being simplistically annulled. But God Who has given to some people bigger talents, God has given them also bigger responsibilities than to others, and therefore they have a more acute conscience. God hasn't given them greater talents in order they to exploit by their skillfulness the people who are less endowed. The talents must not be used egotistically. This is because they are from God.

[486] The lust for being more than he is, it depicts to somebody a great image of himself, and that image will master him as a witchcraft and it will make him angry if not shown to him an honor on the measure of that image. That witchcraft makes him imagine that he is above his real condition.

the devil asked to sift you like a wheat. And I prayer My Father for your faith not to fall" (Lk. 21: 31). Brother, do not look at another, but look at you. Do not spy another's things, for that won't be useful to you at all. And nothing disturbs your heart more than this does[487]. Take heed at not making vain my prayer for you to the Lord[488]. And, I'm letting you know that even if you hadn't come with your request, I would still show you these. Have you sinned? Appease yourself (from the disturbance of the sin). And do not take in account the evil things but the good things (Mt. 12: 35). Mey the Lord forgive you. Rise again upheld by the hand of God and do not trust your thoughts. This is for the devils show the things as they want. Assure yourself against them. This is because they are awful and full of anger against you. May the Lord quickly banish them away from you, brother.

236. The same brother, tormented by the same thoughts, he sent again to the Great Oldman the ask for a word of life. And the Great Oldman sent him in writing the followings:

Brother, you are badly troubled by your thoughts and by the devils with their plotting against your Abba, so that they to make you hate him who loves you and who wants to protect you according to your soul, so that to be fulfilled with you what was written: "Instead of loving me, they slandered me and they paid me the evil ones and they rewarded my love with hatred" (Ps. 108: 3-4)[489]. This is because for many times he convinces you

[487] Do not examine, full of curiosity, the shadows from somebody else's life, but examine yours. This is because, by doing the first thing you will be continuously troubled by the temptation of condemning him, while forgiving about your own sins. And by that you will increase your sins.

[488] The prayer in isolation wont' have a full effect. If I pray for me by myself, and if I don't want to ask other for praying for me, I prove myself being proud and God stays against the proud ones. And if I do not pray for others, I will again prove myself as being egotistic. But if the prayer for another isn't accompanied by his prayer too, that prayer done for him will remain without result. This is in case that that one asked me I to pray for him but he doesn't accompany my prayer with his prayer. But when I pray for another who still is in the waves of the faithlessness, my prayer can have effect upon him. But he must somehow find out that I pray for him and so he will be transposed even for a little in sensitiveness, by my love for him. The prayer has also s purpose of uniting the persons, a purpose of extending and of supporting the Church as a communion of love into God.

[489] In KJB we have: Ps. 109: 4-5: "For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer. // And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love."; in ROB we have: Ps. 108: 3-4: "Instead of loving me, they slandered me, and I was praying. // They

that he loves you and you still won't believe him, because of the envy of the devil making blind your heart, in order you to cogitate the evil thing instead of the good things and the bitter things instead of the sweet things, so that you will be condemned together with him "who calls the good as evil and the sweet as bitter, and with him who reckons the light as darkness and the darkness as light" (Isa. 5: 20)[490]. The devil steals you, because of you being mindless and hesitating with your heart, and you do not understand that he wants to drive you to the perdition of your soul, by making you to hide into yourself and to overlook my words and you to crumble yourself down[491]. Those are useless to you… those are useless to you. If you heart doesn't let you know that the things are so, then you are devil and not man[492]. This is because you have stuck yourself into faithlessness and disobedience. And the disobedient become devils as the devil is. Don't you understand what you are doing, my brother, by bringing your Abba to sadness and by making him to endure the heaviness caused him by you? This is for Abba advises you as on a true and beloved son, as he truly reckons you, and for an instance your heart gets softened, but then you are removed from the good

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put agaisnt me evil things instead of good things and hatred in the place of my love." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[490] This is the lie. And the lie not only that impedes one to know the reality, but the lie also drives the life of him who sustains the lie, and of those who are deluded by him, on a false road, on the road of their non-accomplishment, of the crooking of their being, of uniting their being with the inexistence. By taking the darkness as luminous light, the whole their being will sink into darkness, and they will no longer see any meaning to the existence; the whole existence sinks to them into meaninglessness.

[491] By keeping my words far from you, from your conscience, by twisting my words and by finding in them all sorts of untrue contradictions, you won't touch but their surface, and not their deep meanings which, because of your perverse will, they will remain hidden to you.

[492] If your heart doesn't become known to you, it your heart doesn't let you know that you exist in your fullness, if your heart doesn't assure you that it is satisfied, you are not man but devil. This is because of the devil not searching for any satisfaction in doing good to other and in living of their loving feeling. And the heart is the spiritual organ that connects the human beings. But this is not truly real except by having as foundation the connection between man and God. The devil always works to the individualistic breakage, to the as complete as possible isolation among people. But as there is no human creature non-preoccupied with others, once that human creature has been in connection with others, the devil is preoccupied with others, but only in order do to them evil for promoting the individualistic crumbling of the creation.

and you got changed as the moon (Sirach[493] 27: 12). A have assurance form my Master God that I do not tell you anything without God, and towards the salvation of your soul. And for many times I try to send you word about your thoughts and movements, and I have been having a long-patience with you until today, and I have been waiting for you to understand that what is useful to you. Yes, my sons, suffer me for I am all - unimportant, and get yourself far from your evil thoughts, and you take the good thoughts: innocence, love, long-patience, and humbleness that empties the whole bad of arrows of the devils, and that raised the head of those who achieve the humbleness and it attracts the souls to the grace of God[494]. Wake yourself up, take vigil, be courageous, find comfort in these, and wish your salvation. You must hate the envy[495], the spite, the strife, and things alike. And you must be an innocent sheep in the flock of Jesus, and you must be a honest limb of the community from the monastery, and a sanctified vessel, and a son of the kingdom, and an inheritor of the glory; this is in order you, by living according to the commandments of Christ, to be found worthy of the eternal life and of the glorious resurrection. This is for God is witness to me that I am praying for your soul. May God give me your salvation and your coming to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2: 4)[496]. If you ceaselessly cogitated at my words, you wouldn't commit mistakes, neither would you get strayed, but you would walk on that full of troubles path wanted by God (Mt. 7: 14), that path that leads to that eternal life into Christ Jesus our Lord. May God make you wise, brother, in the things of His will.

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[493] In KJB this book *The Wisdom of Joshua, the Son of Sirach* is not given. The interested reader can download it for free, from www.academia.edu, together with the other thirteen books, grouped under the title: *Bible Missing Texts*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[494] The humbleness, the love, and the other virtues, they are not mere feelings, but they are also steadfast thoughts and real connection among people. The humbleness makes the devil to use one after another his tempting arrows upon humbleness, but without effect.

[495] Hating the envy, hating the hatred, remaining undisturbed, serene, and strong opposing the temptation to hate and to envy.

[496] Barsanuphius often assured the addressee about the fact that he wanted his salvation. But as that one wants to continuously progress in the good things, likewise he wishes him to progress in desiring the salvation for others. The continuous advance into God is unseparated from the continuous advance in the love for others and in all the virtues which make the man evermore alike God and by that evermore loving of people.

237. The question of the same one towards the same one: Forgive me, Abba, for the Lord. I remember that the Fathers tell us to enter our monastic cell and to remember our sins (Paterikon, Pimen 162). But when I remember my sins, I do not feel pain for them. I often want to repent, but I do not succeed in doing that. Tell me what impeded the repentance from coming?

Answer: Brother, you are joking by telling me that you want that, because you actually do not want that. This is because entering you the monastic cell means entering your soul and examining your soul and gathering your thought form any other man. And then we will get pained and we will repent ourselves[497]. If the man doesn't cut off his will, his heart won't get pained. And the faithlessness is born out of the man's will of enjoying the glory from people[498]. The Lord said: "How can you believe, while you receive the glory from people and you do not search for that glory form the unique God (Isa. 5: 44)? For many times you impede the water to descend into your stomach because you sip the water through your nostrils. And you are driven to that by your awful thirst to highlight your justice. That descends the man in hell[499]. That's why the demons mock you are they make the easy things seem difficult to you[500]. So, if you ask me, I will that you that you must either stop your will and you desire for impose your justice and to be pleasant to

[497] Thinking at another man it makes you forget about yourself. You will no longer think at yourself in an egotistic manner, but you will think at him. You will think at you only in order you to become more loving to others, by understanding that on that it depends your salvation. In this sense, you will think at your sins and you will increasingly unveil your sins. And that will cause you pain and pricking, or repentance. But the sins are equally numerous cases of weakening of the love for God and of the love for the neighbor. Therefore, you must repent for your sins, you must strengthen your love for God and for your neighbor. Thinking at another man won't remain on a theoretical plan, but it is united with a judgment usually favorable to your neighbor, a judgment united with the weakening of your egotism. Thus, the thinking at yourself won't either remain on a theoretical plan, but it will be a thought that unveils your sins to yourself, it will be a thought united with a discontent, with an emotional state.

[498] When the importance of the glory from the people starts getting big proportions at somebody, he will no longer see the importance of God in his life. The importance of God in his life can decrease insomuch that itself the existence of God will no longer count to him.

[499] Sometimes you avoid the occasions of directly quenching your thirst for being directly praised. But you still attempt to obtain praises by showing your merits on an indirect way, by justifying your sins, or by bragging yourself with your good deeds.

[500] The deeds from the monastery, which can ease up your salvation, they will make it difficult to you if you try to show those deeds of yours to others.

people, or I will cease (answering to you). This is because, if you do not toil painfully to cut off your will, even if you heart doesn't want that[501], what benefic will you obtain by asking me questions? I have told you: you give the hundred dinars and behold your former sins will be forgiven; but you are striving through the backdoor of highlighting your justice, to fall into something worse. Stop, brother, because of not being good this way. This is for Amma Sarah said (Amma is mother in the Semitic languages): "If I want to be pleasant to all people, I will be forced to repent at everyone's gates" (Paterikon, Sarah 5)[502]. And the Apostle says: "If I was pleasant to people, I wouldn't be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1: 10). If you truly want to cry for your sins, you will take heed at yourself and you will be dead towards any man[503]. This is, brother, because the salvation of the man is done with great efforts. You must cut off these three: you will, your desire for showing your justice, and your desire for being pleasant to people. And then your repentance will truly come to you[504]. And God will shelter you against any evil. Brother, I am testifying to you: take heed at yourself, rejoice when hit and reproached and cursed and rebuked, and remove

[501] The heart is given here an evil meaning. Even if the urge of your heart doesn't want you to cut off your will, you will still cut your will off. There are several sorts of will within man. You must cut off that will that leads you to evil, by using for that cutting your superior will that chooses your true good and that leads you to accomplishing your true being. But this means strengthening your love for God and for people.

[502] I must show everybody that I am nothing, but I'll do that due to my faith int God. And by doing so, I will show also to God that I understand my mistake of searching for the praises of everybody.

[503] Let yourself not be moved by anything coming from people, except their urge to faith and to be a good example.

[504] You must cut off your own will which you want to affirm yourself to others through, or through which you want to satisfy your pleasures through them, or your thirst for demonstrating that you were right in that what you did or you wanted to do, or you must cut off your desire for being pleasant to people for obtaining their praise. Sometimes you go ahead your deed with your affirmation, sometimes you brag yourself with your good deed and you will defend it if you see it criticized, and again, some on other times you want to leave the impression that you do not want to affirm on yourself but you actually want to serve others, but your final goal is actually to affirm on yourself on this indirect way. In all of these you search for satisfaction in yourself, in people, and partially in material things too, so that you won't need God. By doing so you won't be able to repent yourself. The repentance as discontent of yourself, it is contrary to your content with yourself. Until it seems to you that you quench your thirst with the stall water of the mirky puddle from within you, or from within people, you won't search for the clean water spring and always flowing, that is God. Until you are locked up in the preoccupation with yourself, and with the preoccupation with the people's opinion on you, you won't become transparent to God.

from you're the cunningness of the devil and not the wisdom[505]. Earn for yourself the innocence of the dove (Mt. 10: 16) united with the wisdom. If you like it, you will guard it and God will give His hand to you. And if you do not want that, you will see. This is for everyone who wants he wants to have self-mastery. But if you surrender this, you will be worriless for somebody else will take care of you. Chise that what you want.

238. The question of the same one towards the same one: What is the cunningness and what is the wisdom? And what is the innocence united with the wisdom?

Answer: I have spoken to you about the cunningness of the snake, for I respected your wisdom. This is because the devil's cunningness brings within man all his evil thoughts. And if the man remains in those evil thoughts, he will stretch his cunningness against God. And all the things belonging to cunningness are towards the soul's perdition. "This is because any bad tree brings fort bad fruits" (Mt. 7: 17; 12: 33). And the wisdom leads the man to the right-reckoning (to discerning the thoughts). I have told you, brother, keep the innocence of the dove united with the wisdom. This is for its thoughts are good and useful. "This is for any good tree brings fort good fruits" (Mt. 7: 17). And the innocence united with the wisdom leads the man to the resting of his thought, to the appeasement of his soul and of his body and to the eternal life[506]. You must strive yourself to earn these and the Lord will help you. This is for this is His will: all people to be saved.

239. The question of the same tone towards the same one: I pray you, master, because my thought tells me that without appeasement (withdrawal) one cannot repent. So, if possible,

[505] Let's banish away from us the snake's cunningness, but not the wisdom; let's not confound the cunningness to wisdom. The medicine against pride – the pride accompanies, as a shadow, any good that we want to do – it is to say as Jesus advised us: "After you have done all of these, you must say: we are worthless servants, and we have done what we owed to do" (Lk. 17: 10)

[506] The resting form the Kingdom of Heavens is a resting or a souly peace. This resting must start from here.

please grant me a few days of appeasement (withdrawal). And please pray for me so that I will be able to keep that.

Brother, I have accepted your plan, or better said God too accepted you plan, for He can work together with you on everything that is beneficial to you and according to His will nd not according to your will. So taught us our Lord Jesus Christ not to do our will but His as Himself did the will of His Father[507] (Jn. 6: 38). After Him I too I have been stretching my wings over you until today[508]. And I am bearing the burdens of your mistakes and of your overlooking of my words written to you, and of your indifference. And by looking at those, I have been covering them up, as God too looks at and covers up our sins, while waiting for your repentance[509]. And you have become like a man who sat under a tree that overshadowed him and then that man get out in the sun and that's why that man was burnt and brought to perdition. But despite all of these, I haven't forsaken you. This is for alive is our Lord and you must not wonder about that. This is for "the Lord took an oath on Himself that He doesn't' want the death of the sinner but the sinner to turn back and to be alive" (Exod. 18: 23). If the sinner doesn't turn back, he will remain in state of perdition. But you, my son, you have asked me for sour and sweet things; by the sour things I understand your will and by the that things that is

[507] When somebody does the will of God, he makes the will of God as his. But he does that willingly, or he puts his will at God's disposition. This is for the man, by doing the will of God, there will be active too the will of God in man's will. The two wills are united in man and also in God. But not the will of God puts itself to man's disposition, but the man's will it is at God's disposition. The two will reach to be a unit, but without being confounded to one another.

[508] After Christ, or due to Christ, Barsanuphius too was able to stretch his protective wings over his spiritual sons. This is because without the power and the love received by him from Christ, he wouldn't have been able to do that. But without those neither him would have reached the full love for people as wanted by Christ.

[509] Barsanuphius bears and covers the mistakes of his spiritual sons. But he does that only because he is united with Christ, namely only for the power of Christ is within him too, and not because that Barsanuphius would have done that by his own power. He bears those mistakes despite those meaning also a despise manifested to the advices given by him, a thing that could have been interpreted as a personal offence. This is for the love defeats the tendency to feel offended. Christ present within the believer ad spiritually advance man, He is present as One Who continues to suffer for the sinner. So, him who is spiritually advance, he is united with Christ and that's why he suffers together with Christ for the sinners, by impropriating Christ's power and love and by working to turn the sinners back to repentance. Sometimes, the sinners are stubbornly committing even greater sins. But not even then the sinners will be forsaken by Christ and by their spiritual Fathers.

sweet like honey I understand your repentance. By saying: "Grant me a few days of appeasement into withdrawal, for I know what is usually beneficial", you have proven pride. You should have said: "guide me on the path of God". May God enlighten the eyes of your heart so that you to be able to know how much I am toiling for you, sparing you from being lost. But it is needed also a little work from you, in the name of God. Lo, I am giving you a commandment towards salvation, which if you keep it, I will take upon myself that bill that is against you (Col. 2: 14)[510]. And I won't leave you either in the present age or in the age to come, by the grace of Christ.

Do not allow yourself to be deluded by the satiation of your belly. Neither sweeten yourself up by eating and drinking more than your body needs. And guard yourself not to judge anybody. Be obedient and you will reach the humbleness; and your passions will be burnt down within you. Do not speak-against, because of reckoning that the commandment is difficult. This is because of not being possible to be save anybody without tiredness and without keeping the commandment. Lo, I have taken from you your heaviness and your burden and your debt and you have become young and non-burdened by responsibility (innocent) and clean. You must remain from now on in cleanness[511]. By hearing our Savior saying: "Lo, you have been made whole, you must no longer

[510] Like Christ took upon Himself the bill existing against us, and he emptied it on the cross, by suffering in His body for our sins which we should have suffered for, and He defeated the death we owed for those sins by the cleanness He received the death, likewise Barsanuphius in union with Christ defeated the bill that stood upon his spiritual sons, and he was decided to suffer for them. He who united himself with Christ by surpassing any egotism, he will unite himself together with Christ also with them who are under the guilt of their sins. But these too they need to tear down the border of their egotism, in order the guilt for their sin to actually pass upon Christ and upon them who love them and so their sins and their death as punishment for their sins, to lose their power upon them. This passing of the committed sins upon their spiritual Fathers it is founded on the tight union in feeling of the last ones with the first ones. The last ones pour within themselves the guilt they took form their spiritual sons, through their feeling due to their cleanness, or better said due to their cleanness united with the cleanness of Christ, so that Christ's union with us to be accomplished and to be shown also in our union among ourselves.

[511] The sins of the spiritual son had been taken away from him by his spiritual Father. The son was no longer responsible for his sins, he was clean of those, he was rejuvenated, he was like a man who hadn't committed any sin. But he must remain thus. There were united within him innocence with his gratitude for him who unburdened him of his sins and of his bitter experience with his sins, and he wanted in continuation to shun himself of committing sins. Combining those had helped him to no longer commit sins.

commit sins lest something worse to happen to you" (Jn. 5: 14). But you must not reckon that you can be saved effortlessly, because you need tears and ascesis and forcing. Do not allow your body to become drowsy, because that will bring you down[512]. This is because surely could be brought down even the great ones if they do not take heed. Encourage yourself, therefore, my brother, and keep my commandments, better said Lord's commandments, and you will rejoice. And the Lord will guard you against the cunning one, and He will gladden you in His Kingdom. You must always cogitate at these. You must desire to be saved and the Lord will save you, Who the glory is due forever. Amen.

240. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Forgive me, Master Abba, for the Lord. Your holiness told me: "Behold, your sins have been forgiven". But Abba Isaiah says that "until the man feels the pleasure for his sins, his sins haven't been forgiven" (Recueil ascétique de L'Abbe Isaïe, Abbaye de Bellefontaine 1790, p. 100). But behold that I feel pleasure for them[513]. Please clarify me, for the lord, because I am tormented by the thought that tells me: "By bring so, you shouldn't have accepted the ordination. This is for this thing is intertwined with the vain-gloriousness and with difficulty". That's why I doubt about my deaconship. I also pray you to tell me what is about that thought that tells me that I have been forsaken by God. This is because I have been very upset during the last week by the thought of fornication.

Answer: Of, will of the cunning devils! Oh, deceit of their chieftain, of the devil that hates the good and the people from the beginning to the very end! This is because, as he parted himself from God, he wants to destroy all the people[514]. Brother,

[512] The drowsiness of the body it is the drowsiness of the soul too. An idle and pretentious body it has gone out of control. The soul no longer had power over that body. It is not about a body that is ill and therefore won't have so many debts, but it is about a body ceding easily to any temptation and that it doesn't want and therefore neither it can to strain itself easily in an effort, in a resistance.

[513] In the Volos Edition, at note no. 1: "Namely I still have the baith and the memory of the pleasure, brought to me by the devil; in my imagination". In the French translation the letters no. 226-250 are addressed to a deacon.

[514] The devils aim at disorganizing the entire creation of God, he wants to bring in derision this masterpiece of God in its wholeness, so that the people themselves to criticize and to

I told you that your previous sins have been forgiven, but their wars haven't stopped. This is because the man keeps battling. Even if you haven't committed sins, the devil will have brought their pleasure to you. But because you have committed sins, the more the devil will bring their pleasure to you. And that what Abba Isaiah says it concerns the mode of the pleasures had by them who surrender themselves to pleasures. Actually, it is something else that somebody remembers the sweetness of the honey and it is something else accepting to taste the honey when remembering about it[515]. He who remembers the pleasure of his sins but he doesn't commit the things of the pleasure, but he resists those and he fights them away, he has been forgiven his previous sins.

But these are the craftsmanships of the enemy and opposant of ours, who always wants to swallow alive the people in order to bring them to discouragement regarding their salvation and to despair relatedly to the eternal life, on them who do not lean themselves against the hard rock of the faith, of which each one received his measure. Therefore, you must guard yourself against those, lest you will fall totally in the hands of the devil, and the Lord will have mercy on you, for He is forever alive.

Regarding the ordination, who dares to say about himself that he is worthy of it, except that one who has gone totally

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mock its Author. But the people themselves reach by that to be the object of the demons' mockery. Being deceived by their apparent independence from God, the people declare themselves as the product of an unconscious nature and they despise one another, and they kill and they exploit on one another mercilessly. Believing that they mock God, they actually mock on themselves and they lose any respect for one another and the lie to one another shamelessly. Believing that they mock God, the people actually mock on themselves and they lose any respect for one another and they blunt up their capacity of perceiving the untold mystery of the humanity and of the creation. The people seem carried away by an endless thirst for destroying the humanity and the creation. But the people actually cannot destroy those. This is for God's mystery is above people's power. But the people make their existence to be increasingly tormenting, they grind down themselves, but they cannot bring their existence to inexistence. They use their existence towards hatred and enmity, they reduce it to a superficial understanding, and they lose any meaning of their existence, by stubbornly refusing the obvious and eternal values.

[515] In the Volos Edition at note: "By tasting the saints understands here, as I reckon, the accompanying or the consenting to the pleasure of the previously done by man. So, to this man who accompanies by will and who tends to and who consents the pleasure of the sins committed before, by that what he has taken the habit of the sin, his sins haven't been forgiven, according to this saint. But to shim who doesn't accompany and who doesn't consent to the pleasure of his previous sins, but he resists that pleasure and he fight it, due to the hatred impropriated by him against sinning, his sins has been forgiven."

crazy and who has totally forgotten about himself? So, you must liturgize to God on the level granted to you, while condemning yourself and waiting for the mercy and for the help of the Lord. And during the Liturgy, take heed and say: "Serve the Lord while fearing Him and get glad of Him with tremble" (Ps. 2: 11[516]); and: "He Who makes His angels ghosts and His servants (who liturgize) flames of fire" (Ps. 103: 5[517]). Do not fear, you haven't been forsaken by God. This is for, if we do not forsake Him, neither Him will forsake us[518]. This is for it is His will us to turn back and to be saved.

And your annoyance from the part of the devil of the fornication it comes to you because of your thoughts against your neighbor and because you judge him. But that also comes to you because of the daring familiarity with those whom I have told you not to have that familiarity with. And, if they who want to get rich worldly, they often endanger themselves at sea and by travelling and they endure that, how much more must we do that for we are waiting for the Kingdom of Heavens and for we want to be called as sons of God? We, who hear that our fight is not against the blood and the body, but against the principalities and the masteries (Eph. 6: 12)? Have you been resisting the sin all the way to the blood, or have you been exhausted by the ghost of the sadness and of the idleness? What have you suffered? What have you endured? What temptations of many sorts have you endured gladly? Of, you sleepy monk. You must show to the devil that you are living to God; you must run to God. You must surrender to God your hands and your feet when you swim through the thoughts waves which surround you and which elevate you up to heavens and which lower you into the bottomless precipices (Ps. 106: 26[519]). I testify to you in front of God that my heart has been stretched with you, as God Who has built it up knows, and for God has placed within my heart the covenant of His

[516] In KJB we have: Ps. 2: 11: "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling."; in ROB we have: Ps. 2: 11: "Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice of Him with tremble" (E. l. t.'s n.)

[517] In KJB we have: Ps. 104: 4: "Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire:"; in ROB we have: Ps. 103: 5: "You Who make Your angels ghosts and Your servants flame of fire."

[518] If we do not lock up ourselves against Him, He will enter within us.

[519] In KJB we have: Ps. 107: 26: "They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble."; in ROB we have: Ps. 106: 26: "The went up to the skies and they went down in the deeps, and they soul was petrified into dangers." (E. l. t.'s n.)

holy commandments kept by my heart, in order to get you out of darkness by the power of God to the true light, and out of the condemnation to death to the life of the righteousness[520]. Take heed, brother. Because without tiredness and humbleness it is impossible one to be saved.

241. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: For your holiness commanded to me that I must liturgize, show me, please, what should I think or cogitate while standing in the alter with the priest and sharing the Holy Bread and giving the Holy Chalice towards drinking, of when taking the Holy Impartation to somebody? And, should I put one a certain vestment appointed for the service of the Liturgy, or should I cover my body all the way down to my heels?

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, all the things done symbolically have spiritual meanings, but you cogitate them bodily. He who serves as deacon, he must be like the cherubs are, wholly eye, whole in his mind, cogitating and looking at the ones from above and extolling them with fear and tremble. This is for the bear the body and the blood of the immortal emperor. He takes also the image of the seraphs by singing the doxology and by swinging their holy wings over the hidden Mysteries, showing through their wings the easement of the earthly and material thing and ceaselessly shouting out with the mind, within the church of the inward man, the victory song consecrated to the glory of great appropriateness of our God: "Holy, Holy, Holy is Lord Sabaoth. Full are the sky and the earth of His glory". The devils will run away, shaking, from the enslaved soul, by the utterance of this fearsome heralding, and so they leave that soul free from their slavery. That soul will see that the true light has dawned to him[521]. And by taking heed,

[520] The heart of the spiritual father is stretching itself through all the waves of the temptations and of the hardships fought by his spiritual son, in order him to give to his spiritual son power to overcome those, and in order to bring his spiritual son to light. His love makes him overcoming the space in order him to be everywhere with his spiritual son, as the mother's heart is everywhere with her son, participating to the son's joys and troubles and communicating to the son, in any situation, a power corresponding to the state the son is in.

[521] That what happens on the unsee plan, it is prolonged also in the feeling of the soul. This man no longer feels himself mastered by any passions, but he is totally free and light and he

he sees the great beauty of the immortal Lamb and he wants to satiate himself with His body and blood. And then he hears David shouting out and saying with a loud voice: "Taste and see that good if the Lord"[522] (Ps. 33: 9). And by getting close with his fear, he will become partaker to His body and to His blood, and their taste will become indelible within him, and they will guard him against any passion[523].

These things you most cogitate, either you stand in front of the Holies, or you share them to be eaten and drunk, or you bring the Holy Impartation to somebody, either you gather the Mysteries, or you simply perform your serving to alter.

Regarding the vestment, you must earn your spiritual coat that is pleasant to God. And the coat long to your heels, it means the killing of your limbs. This is for, tell me brother, if the man wears a whole purple coat but he is debauched, will his vestment clean him up of his fornication or of his passions? So, what would they do, they who are worthy of the Holy Mysteries but who have no vestments? God commanded us to have a sole coat: that of the virtues. May God make all of us worthy of that coat, forever. Amen.

242. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman. Forgive me, master, and pray for me through the Lord, so that my senses to be sanctified. This is for your holiness told me about deacon that he must be like the cherubs and the seraphs. But I am defiling myself through my senses. What

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flies like a seraph in a spiritual sky from around the all-loving of everybody emperor who is, in the same time, that light that fills all realities up with meaning: the meaning of the eternal love among all realities, out of the spring of the eternal love of the Holy Trinity.

[522] In the light of all the meaning which are in the eternal love among all realities, the soul sees it concretized in the Lamb being in state of imperishable sacrifice and ready to give His body and blood to be eaten and drunk by people, as full and simply giving of immortal life. In order Him top be able to give us all the richness of His godlike gifts, He has taken a human body accessible to us, and He placed His body in state of generous sacrifice of us, as expression of His love for us to the very end, and He bestows us by this mediation the whole treasure of His goods, for the Lord is good, He is sweet, and He makes us good and sweet to one another. Meeting us one another into Christ, in gentleness, in kindness, in the fullness of the endless life, in the eternal understanding of the reciprocal value, one rooted into God. What an ocean of meanings is unveiled to us into Christ Who is the Light of the eternal Father and Who has come near to us forever, through body!

[523] Being us filled up and deeply and forever imbued with the gentle and loving sweetness of the Lamb sacrificed for us, not rude and perishable passion will attract us anymore. This is for any passions will seem to him who is on this level, as a coarse and pitiful trivialization.

should I do in order my deaconship not to be towards my condemnation? This is because I am worthless and I cannot restrain myself. Help me for God, in order I not to totally lose my soul.

Answer: Force yourself, your deaconship, to always bear in your mind how the deacon must be and how you are. Think at death and at how you will have to answer to God and, by ceaselessly condemning on yourself, your heart will get pricked in order to receive the repentance. He Who says through the prophet: "You first tell your sins in order you to be corrected" (Isa. 43: 26), He will make you righteous, and He will get your rid of all tiredness. This is for he says: "God is Him Who justifies, so who will condemn us?" (Rom. 8: 33). As I have been showing you for several times, obey and you will be saved. And do not say, by resisting it: "Why is this and why is that?". But make yourself obedient especially to your Abba, he who is second to God in taking care of you and whom your soul has been entrusted to[524]. And if you force yourself to keep these, I will make my power more than abundant. May the Lord guard you and cover you against the coning one. Amen.

243. Of the same tone towards the same one: Tell me, Father, what do you advise me to do in the small liturgical service that I have? This is because, even if I am not mocked by devils, as in most of the remaining time, even only for a coat, it is not easy to me to restrain myself. I am going to do, since now on, everything you command me, so that I can receive mercy. This is for God know what disorder and what passions I am in. Pary for the through the Lord, in order I not to be separated from your bosom at least in the present age. This is because I feel shame for asking that for the age to come too, because of my passions.

[524] The humbleness and the obedience have a decisive importance for salvation, for they mean the killing of any egotism in you, because the egotism separates not only the man from people, but also the man from God, as a separation wall (Eph. 2: 14). Where there are the humbleness and the obedience, God will enter unimpeded. This is foy you will feel a supreme authority in front of which you feel humbled and which you obey to. In free and joyful humbleness and in obedience you will live your getting rid of all oppressions, and you will live your free relationship with the absolutely free God, and God rejoices of being freely and lovingly recognized by You. In humbleness you see and you freely accept your infinite smallness and, implicitly, you will be upheld by the infinite power and loving-generosity of God.

Answer: Brother, "striving in everything" (Paterikon, French Edition, Les sentences des Pères du désert, Solesmes, 1966, p. 362, no. 16) and the humbleness bring the man to progress. This is for the Apostle says: "Suffering trouble into all things, but not narrowed" (2 Cor. 4: 8). By throwing all our material need upon Abba and by not keeping anything with our hands, God know and He is our witness that we do not reckon that Abba must thank us, but we are the ones who must thank him for taking our burden upon himself and so he has liberated us from worries. This is for Apostle Peter says too: "Obey any human being, for the Lord" (1 Pt. 2: 13). And James said that "anybody who keeps the whole law, but he commits sin towards only one point of the law, he has become guilty towards all the law's points (Jas. 2: 10). That's why it is required one not to do his will, but him to reproach on himself in all things, and so he will find the mercy form God. But if the devil mocks him, by making him to cogitate something big about himself, or that he worked well, he will lose all the things done by him. So, by doing what you are doing, humble yourself by saying: "Forgive me, Lord, for I have burdened Abba by throwing upon him my burden". And may Lord Jesus save you. Amen.

244. Another brother deacon no longer wanted to serve in the altar, because of thinking at his previous sins. And he asked the same Great Oldman concerning his bodily illness. And The Great Oldman answered him those:

Brother, the Scripture taught us that "they who want to live with the right faith according to Christ, they will be persecuted" (2 Cor. 3: 12). How can be us persecute in the present time? Through those demons who chase us away from the fear of God and from serving God. And the repentance for sin consists of no longer committing that sin; and the deliverance from evil deeds consists of stopping ourselves from doing those evil deeds. Do not allow yourself to be saddened by your previous sins, and do not stop yourself from serving as deacon, but you must consecrate your serving to God with fear and tremble. And take heed that your serving as deacon brings

holiness to your soul[525]. And if you believe so, you will always tremble not to commit sin and not to fall off holiness. Bear your sufferings and your troubles, for they are a corrective rebuking from God. And God will have mercy of you and they will be towards the salvation of your soul[526].

245. Another brother askes the same Great Oldman: Tell me, Father, if there is a wrath according to nature and a wrath contrary to nature?

Answer: Brother, there is a wrath according to nature and a wrath contrary to nature. That one according to nature fights not to be fulfilled the lusts of the nature. This wrath doesn't need medicines for it is a healing wrath. That wrath contrary to nature fights when are impeded the wills of the lust to be fulfilled. This is for superior to the soldier is him who gives power to the soldier. And if that one is weakened, the soldier will no longer have power[527].

246. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Where have the passions come from within man?

Answer: God created both the soul and the body without passions. But they fall into passions through disobedience.

[525] Refusing to serve in altar because of your past sins it means allowing yourself to be chased away from this serving, by the devils. Barsanuphius repeats that itself the refraining from sinning mean being delivered from sins. This is for the refraining from committing sins, it brings in the strength manifested by it, also a transformation into your being, given that the refraining means a continuous fear of God, some sort of living His power within yourself. This is one with a serving that is appropriate to the full-of-tremble serving to altar, and that serving too will increase this sanctification.

[526] Enduring the illness and the troubles with the sentiment that they are a rebuking from God towards our correction, that at its turn will produce a gradual mutation within your being, a mutation accompanied by refraining from sinning. The sin and the virtue are total states of the human being, which are modified by man's freedom. There where the sin and the virtue are negated, are also denied the freedom and the possibility to change in good or in evil, of the human nature through freedom, the man being reckoned as a piece of nature whom the nature's laws are fulfilled without his consent.

[527] The lust is the one giving power to the wrath as to a soldier of its.

247. Another brother asked the same Great Oldman: I am troubled by the passions of my soul. Tell me, for God, what should I do to liberate myself from them? And pray for me.

Answer: Brother, he who wants to be saved and who desires to be children of God, let him earn humbleness, submission, and obedience; and non-daring[528]. Take heed at the fact that you have asked me: "What should I do?". And lo, I have told you what you should do. And I guarantee you that you won't be mastered either by the enemy of by the passions. This is for they are burnt by humbleness as by a fire, and you heart will become serene and enlightened by Christ[529]. His to be the glory forever. Amen.

248. The same brother, after receiving from Abba the order him to live together with an old man and to him to serve that old man, he asked the other Oldman: How can I know, Father, if it is according to God so sit (inside the monastic cell), or that I won't be harmed by not being together with the brothers form the monastery, but alone, a state which the passions trouble me in? Regarding the passions, what do you command me to do? Likewise, about the sleep? For I fear the sleep's mastery/ Likewise, about forgetfulness. And because I am troubled by the ugly passion, what is the sign of my agreeance to it?

The answer of John: If you want to know whether it harms you of it benefits you to sit (inside the monastic cell), you will have this sign: If you sit due to the fact that you obey the commandment, you will know that that is beneficial to you; this

[528] There is a good and a bad daring. The good daring is that one that trusts the mercy of God. The bad daring is that that defies the commandments of God, that doesn't get humble, that doesn't obey them who are appointed to the businesses of the community, that daring crossing over the rules of the good manners among people. This daring is united with the shamelessness. This daring seems to be an act of freedom but it isn't so. The true freedom consists of humbleness, for the humbleness is nourished out of the love from God and for God, between the humble one and God being a relationship of love in freedom. The naughty, the shameless, on the contrary, he is pushed by his daring by a passion undermined by debauchery or by pride.

[529] Maybe this is one of the meanings of the world which Christ was seen as fulfilling the hearts of the hesychasts in, who were practicing starting with the XII-XIV Centuries, the ceaseless prayer. The humbleness and the obedience bring quietude for the man has found on himself, at his ease, into the love for God into Christ.

is for he says: "The obedience is superior to sacrifice" (1 Kings[530] 15: 22). But if you resist in word, you will be harmed. This is because resisting by word is out of an evil impulse. Then, you won't separate yourself form your brothers. May that not be! And God appointed you so, for, given your body's weakness, you to have an alleviation through that old man.

Regarding your passions, they will be moved against the man in order the man to be proven. This is because "the non-tempted man is untested" (Agrapha no. 90). And because you said: "I sit alone", you must not cogitate that because of hurting you. This is for you aren't alone, if you believe, for you have God[531] Whom the Great Oldman has surrendered you to, as you also have the prayer that works together with you. You must only show obedience and nothing else and you will be saved[532]. So, do not fear, for you won't be harmed.

And regarding the psalms, you can do what the brothers do, by singing three psalms and by doing kneelings. And the sleep won't defeat you. You must to so during night, except in case of illness.

The forgetfulness is the perdition of the soul, there where it comes out of despising and carelessness[533].

And the shameful and ugly passion needs the exhaustion of the heart and of the body in order it to be uprooted: of the heart by ceaselessly praying to God, of the body by persecuting your body and by bringing your body to submission with the whole your power.

And the sign of the agreeance consists of being that thing pleasant to the man and of getting his heart sweetened and of cogitating him at that thing with pleasure. And when somebody resists that thought and he fight not to accept it, he shows that

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[530] In the KJB we have: 1 Samuel. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[531] He who believe in God, he has God next to him and within him. The faith and the prayer are the signs of the work of God within man. When you think at somebody, you are in a communication with him. All the more you are in a communication with God when you think at God with trust in Him and when you address your asks for help to God.

[532] In the unhesitating obedience you have liberated of yourself and you have fully surrendered yourself to God. This is for in God's name you obey him whom has been given you to obey to.

[533] The forgetfulness is negligence. The forgetfulness has the tendency to repeat itself and to become a habit. By forgetfulness you will forget about your duties, and then even about yourself. But by that you will forget about God too. As such, the forgetfulness is the death of the soul, for it is the death of your sensitiveness to the reality of God, to the imperishable deep of your life, and so you will look only at the biological plan of your existence.

he chooses the war. And this brings to the man testing and progress. May our Lord Jesus Christ to clean you up of your sins and to strengthen you with His kindness in your weakness. Amen.

249. The question of the same one towards the same one: What the obedience is? And what should I ask in prayer? And if somebody tells me: "Pray for me", what should I do? Must I remember him always?

Answer: The obedience cuts off one's will. But without striving nobody can achieve the obedience[534]. And if you sit (inside your monastic cell) by obeying the commandment and not in order to rest your body, by doing so you won't fulfill your will, neither will you sit together with the passion, but you will do that rather to be pleasant to God. But if you sit and sweeten yourself with the resting, you won't be pleasant to God.

Regarding the prayer, you will say: "Lord, deliver me from my sins and from my reproachable passions". And if somebody tells you: "Pray for me", you will say within your heart: "May

[534] The obedience is a cutting off of your surface will, through another will that is deeper. It is a cutting off of that will that is pleasant to egotism, through the will of mastering your egotism of the pleasures, that one that keeps you in the narrowness of the biological and individualistic horizon, and it is that will of raising into the broadness of the godlike and altruistic horizon. There is more straining of the will in obeying than in disobeying. The egotistic life is a frivolous caprice, it is a pampering. That's why one can tell that one cannot cut off the disobedient will without an exhaustion of the heart and of the body. It is called that will that we must cut it off, as "own will", because through is the man serves only on himself egotistically, or in he serves himself firstly. But that will that somebody cuts off this "own will" it is that will that has the man as its subject, but as a subject putting his will in the service of God and of his fellow humans. And by this he puts his will in the service of his self that is destined to a superior and imperishable life. Such a man somewhat does the will of others, and not his egotistic will, but that will that serves others' good that is identical to the own good. In the same time, he does the will of God Who aims at his good and at the good of his fellow humans. This is for, as Saint Maximos the Confessor says (Opuscula theological et polemica), God wants that what promotes the true nature of the man, namely that what is according to the true will of the man. In this way, in deep, the man's will (or the will of all people) and the will of God coincide, though the subjects differ. Still, for the will of God stays at the basis of the man's being and will, though the last one is not from himself, one can talk about two wills. Likewise, one can talk about two wills in Christ, but also about a consummate unity between those two wills in Christ, especially for within Him there is also a unique Subject of those wills. In the Kingdom go God there will be a consummate union between the will of all people and the will of God, according to the example of the two will within Christ.

God have mercy on us" and that will suffice. And to always remember him it is not given to you, but to the consummate ones who can ceaselessly pray for others[535].

250. The question of the same one towards the same one: I pray you, Father, tell me how can I know that I am into obedience and I have left my own will? And what should I do in order I to be equal to the brothers? This is for I hear from the Fathers that he who is into obedience and he doesn't do his own will, but he is equal to the brothers in all things, he will advance very quickly. And I examine my heart to see if I live the life into monastery as the brother do, but I do not receive any assurance, because I untie (the fasting) before they do it and I eat before they eat and I eat alone. I would want to test myself whether I could eat later, but I fear to do that because of my illness.

Answer: You will be able to find out if you live a monastic life if you ascertain that you do nothing by your own will, neither you eat alone, nor together with the brothers, but in order you to do the things commanded to you without hesitation. You reckon yourself as one among the ill ones. But are the ill ones outside monastery because of eating alone? Let that not be! But they do that because of their illness, at the commandment of Abba. So, God has given you as reason to serve the old man, in order the inexperienced ones not to be offended by seeing you eating earlier. So, it is not your decision to eat later with those who are not ill. And if you are ill, you must take care of yourself and that gives birth within you to sadness. So, lo that you have been given a motif not to cause offense to somebody else, not to be you tormented by thinking that you eat alone. Thus, the live from monastery and the equality of the brothers from monastery consist of doing all things at the command of the Abba and not according to your

[535] He who prays for another, he too will gain. This is for he commits an act of love and he progresses in love, ascending to a superior state. Ad he prays for himself too. This is for by the fact that he prays he places himself in connection with God from Whom comes kindness and power. So, by continuously praying yourself for another, you will continuously pray for yourself too. But how many can do that? And then, who can always bear in mind all the people and continuously? But the consummate one can have them in this thought virtually. Anyway, somebody's prayer for another unites him with that one in his thought. Thus, the prayer is a means of union among people.

own will. Can's you remember that you resisted Aba and you didn't want to fulfill his commandment? How dared you to mumble into your stupidity? Did you fight for eating? Didn't you fight for fulfilling your own will? If you want to benefit and to remain into the monastic life, you must cut off your own will in all things and you must obey equally much as the brothers do, and lo that you are together-inhabitant with them into the monastery's community, towards the benefit of your soul[536], guided by your Fathers, by the Great Oldman, and by the others. You must follow their advices by the grace of Christ. This is for they know, brother, better than you do, that what is beneficial to your soul.

251. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Being asked by the old man whom he was serving to, and that man was a cleric, and the brother was not a cleric, to utter the prayer and to bless the food, or being him appointed to other things like this one, he asked if he must obey the old man regarding that.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Hun yourself from rejoicing of the honor given to you, but manifest the obedience which banishes away the resistance that is hated by God and by them who love God. You must keep the obedience that elevates one to heavens and that makes them who have it alike the Son of God[537]. Him it is due the glory forever. Amen.

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[536] Not in the uniformity of the accomplished things consists the unity of the life into monastery of, but it consists of the uniformity of obeying the Fathers from the monastery, who give each monk to accomplish a thing that matches his benefit. Everyone must obey in an absolute manner, as to God, but in order to be each one led towards consummation on a line fitting him, according to his own talents (the Biblical talents / the money (E. l. t.'s n.)) which must be developed, but also according to the weaknesses which must be taken in account. Apostle Peter goes on his line, John goes on his line, but each of them manifested the same total self-giving to God. God hasn't made the people uniformly, neither God wants to uniformize the people.

[537] The obedience being one with the humbleness, it elevates him who has it, to heavens, according to the word of our Savior: "he who humbles himself, he will be elevated" (Mt. 23: 12; Pt. 5: 5). This is for, through humbleness, the Son of God too, He ascended to heavens as man, in total humbleness and obedience, which the man has been elevated through, above himself; through humbleness and obedience the man find God and he totally opens himself to God. Until the man is preoccupied with himself in an egotistical mode, he won't be able to experience God and he won't be able to receive God. In humbleness the man can unite himself with God and with all the people, and he can comprise God and all the people.

252. Another brother (in the French Edition: Dositheos) asked the other Oldman: Because I have some money (some goods) and I want to give a part of those to the monastery and the other part to the poor, tell me Father how should I share those through Abba?[538]

The answer of John: Brother, my first answers sent to you, I formulated them as towards one who still needs milk (Hebr. 5: 12). But now when you want consummate obedience, you too must do what was written: "Open your mouth and I fill it up" (Ps. 80: 9[539]). Brother, you need not to learn from me, because I am the most unimportant one, what you should do, but you must learn from the Acts of the Apostles, about those who were selling their belonging and they put the piece at the feet of the Apostles, so that "they shared to everyone according to their need" (Acts 4: 35), and no by themselves but through the Apostles. And thus, they were delivered form the worry for their money and from their vain-gloriousness. If you want to reach this measure, and if you want to enjoy the carelessness, and fi you want to occupy yourself with the care for God[540], you will do alike. Brother, the present things are very few in comparison to what some ones gave to Abba Isaiah. This is for "some people gave him thousands of coins, by telling him: "Use them as you wish". They did not tell him when and how he should have used those coins. Those ones did a consummate thing and they liberated themselves from worries. And you,

[538] The French translation gives the letters from no. 259 to no. 338 as addressed to Dositheos, whose "teachings" have been given by us in the Romanian translation in the volume IX of *The Romanian Philokalia*, pp. 463-645.

[539] In the KJB we have: Ps. 81: 10: "I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it."; in ROB we have: Ps. 80: 9: "For I am Lord you God Who got you out of the land of Egypt. Open your mouth and I will ill it up." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[540] There is worry and worry. There is the worry for ourselves and for the things of the world, which we are satisfying our needs through, and there is the care for God, a care that is no longer in the service of the egotism. Through the last one we throw upon God the care for ourselves, and God will take care of us (1 Cor. 5: 7). This actually is the care of not worrying about ourselves, the care of being free from ourselves, for God in Whom, since now, there is the whole our present and future life, the whole our spiritual breathing, the whole our self-certitude. Taking care of God means thinking at God always, and thinking at fulfilling His commandments, which we advance into living with Him and in the care for our fellow humans, and by that we will fulfill the true care for ourselves.

once it has been the will of God for you to come to this joy, you owe God thanks and you must show your thankfulness to him who bear your burden. Let the sower of the evil things to sow within you the thought that he who has received your money he should thank you. May God make with you that what is useful to your soul's salvation.

253. The same one asked the Great Oldman if he should share his money (his goods) through Abbam and how he should share those and whom?

Answer: May the Lord bless you, my son. You want to be worriless but you do not want actually, because of being you impeded by your will. You must only tell what do you want to let to the community and to them who are in need, and then be worriless. This is the obedience, namely not having master upon yourself[541]. What is more valuable than you soul, which the Lord said about that is more precious than the whole world (Mt. 16: 26)? And if you have surrendered your soul to God and to your spiritual Fathers, why will you continue hesitating to entrust them the less important things? Can you see how are you warred, without you realizing it, by vain-gloriousness and by faithlessness? And because of you are so, that means that you haven't truly entrusted them your soul and, therefore, how can you expect to find mercy through them? You must liberate yourself of worries, if you want to occupy yourself with God while liberated from all things. And I will take care of being fulfilled that what you decided. You must only occupy yourself, in a worriless manner, with God. And forgive me for the sake of the love[542].

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[541] Not being you unwillingly mastered by anything, that is one stage. But not allowing yourself to be mastered in the name of God invoking the reason that you want to command to yourself, it also can mean that you are mastered by all caprices. Saint Apostle Paul says: "Live as free men, but not as having your freedom as cover to your evilness, but as servants of God" (1 Pt. 2: 16). Only into God you can be free of yourself, namely of all the inferior things. Only by obeying God you will strongly feel God's glory and love, which make you free of all limited things, and which lead you to the truly unlimited life. On the other hand, obeying God means allowing God to be Master with His will and with His love upon you, and it means you not wanting to be master upon yourself while closed to God's love. This is because this one is another slavery.

[542] Why did he finished all his letters by asking the addresses for forgiveness, though he didn't do anything wrong to them? He couldn't be happy into God if he knew that somebody

254. the question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Tell me, Father, hos can one reach to cut his own will off, and how can one reach that state that he will be able to say in: "Lo, I have left everything for You and I have followed You" (Mt. 19: 27)? This is for I have kept for me a small plot of land for my subsistence, because I am ill.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Leaving the own will is one with shedding your blood, namely it is equal to somebody reaching in that fight for cutting off his will to death[543]. And the word: "Behold, I have left everything and I have followed you", it tells us about consummation and not about small plots of land and a small money. That word tells us also about thoughts and wills. But you haven't reached that consummation yet. If you have come closer to it, you will hear that what you ought to do. For now, you must keep only this: be worriless towards all things and worries. And keep that small plot of land, for now, for your subsistence. May Lord Jesus Christ bring you at the untold joy. This is for He is the eternal light[544]. Amen.

255. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Pray the Lord for me and tell me what should I do

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remained outside, because of being troubled by having something against him. He must continuously fight for making serene the soul of any man whom he had a connection with, here on earth. That's why, one who doesn't forgive or who doesn't ask for forgiveness, he won't be able to enter the Kingdom of Love. Then, who can tall that he has done everything for another? There still might one be troubled. There can be even a jealousy on them who are very faithful and kind, so that some people do not feel well by seeing those. That's why the good ones need to humble themselves to the maximum, in order not to give the envious one the feeling that they reckon themselves and superior to the envious. If they, though, cannot make them to accept their communion in the Kingdom of Heavens, they will remain, on one hand, with a compassion for those, but on the other hand they can do nothing. In a way, those ones feel "better" outside their company. It is more supportable to them the torment coming to them out of despising the joy for better of the good ones, than to live with disgust in their company.

[543] Namely to the death asked from him and towards which he feels himself driven to endure it for the good of another or for that one's escape.

[544] Christ is the untold joy, for He has within Himself the untold love for us. But this joy, or love, it comprises within it also the supreme meaning, or all the things of the existence. The evil ones are darkened and they are in darkness because of not having any full and durable joy, or any true understanding of the existence's meaning.

because I am very warred by fornication and I am endangered of falling into despair and I neither can refrain myself (from food) because of the weakness of my body.

Answer: Brother, the devil, because of envying you, he has started war against you. Therefore, you must guard your eyes and you mustn't eat until you get satiated. And drink a little wine for the weakness which you have told me about. But you must earn your humbleness, for by humbleness all the traps of the enemy will be broken (Paterikon, Saint Anthony 7). And I, the too unimportant one, I will put all my power to pray God to defend you against all temptations and to guard you against all evils. Do not bow down brother, neither surrender yourself to despair, because that is the great joy of the devil. But by ceaselessly praying yourself, say: "Lord Jesus Christ, save me of the reproachable passions". And you will find the mercy from God. And so, you will receive power through the prayers of the saints. Amen.

256. The same brother, because of being warred by the same passion of the fornication, he asked the same Great Oldman to pray for him and to tell him how could one know whether he is tempted by his lust or by the enemy?

Answer: Brother, without tiredness and without the crushing of the heart, no one can be saved of passions and no one can be pleasant to God. So, when somebody is tempted by his lust, that is a sign that he hasn't taken care of himself, and he allowed his heart to the things committed by him previously. And so, he brings through himself the anger upon himself, because of his own lust. And the mind, by gradually getting blind, it reaches, because of its nescience, to take heed at him whom the mind lusts for and the mind will search motifs for talking to him and to sit together with him, and it will come on all ways to satisfy its lust. Thus, letting your thought into these ones, it means increasing the war leading to falling, if not with the body at least with the ghost, by consents. And so, the man reaches to ignite within himself the fire like in a matter. On the contrary, the awake and wise man who wants to be saved, by seeing where his harm is coming from, he will guard on himself with the whole care against any evil memory, in order him not

to tarry with his thought at passions, as he will also guard himself against looking and against meetings and against any contrived motif, because of fearing not to ignite that fire into himself. Behold, the war caused by lust, or by the own will. And the temptation coming from the devil is this: The heart of him who wants to be saved fears to receive the seed[545], and by that he guards on himself, with watchfulness, against the evil memory and against occupying his thought with the passions, as also he avoids looking or meeting. And if the need for something requires him to meet somebody, he will rather miss that thing than to lose his soul. Take vigil, brother, for you are mortal and temporary. Do not agree to lose your eternal life for the short duration pleasure. What other benefit will bring you the stench and the uncleanness of the sin except shame and condemnation? And the restraint brings the victory, the crown and the praise. Bridle up your horse in the bridle of the knowledge, lest by looking here and there to get mad for women, or better said for men, and on you, its reader, it to throw you down[546]. Pray God Him "to turn your eyes so that your eye not to see the rottenness" (Ps. 118: 37[547]). And if you have achieved a manly heart, the wars will be easily banished away from you. Make yourself stinging as the wine is to the wound, and you won't allow the stench and the uncleanness to pile up. Achieve the crying, in order the crying to estrange you from the daring the unravels the souls of those who have achieved it[548]. Do not throw away that toll which the fertile land it cannot be worked without. And this tool is the humbleness crafted for us by the Great God, which all the weeds are uprooted by from God's field and which causes grace to those

[545] In the Volos Edition, at note: "Or the attack, or the bait from the enemy".

[546] The horse is something else than the rider. The body's lust and the will for sinning risen by this lust, they are something else than the will of the subject who is the true master over all the things which the man is constituted by, though the will of the subject can cede and he can place himself, to some extent, in the service of the lust and of the sin. To some extent, the subject is unwilling dragged, or with the half of his will, into the things which he, on one hand, he feels contrary to him, and so he can be brought, by repetition, to the death of his soul, so that the man almost becomes some sort of automate, or an object carried away, here and there, by his repressed impulses.

[547] In KJB we have: Ps. 119: 37: "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way."; in ROB we have: Ps. 118: 37: "Turn my eyes away so not to see the vanity; in my way, make me alive." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[548] It is about the naughty and insensitive daring that makes the soul blunt and able to laugh at all gentle sentiments, at all respect for the superior values.

who work that field with the tool of the humbleness[549]. The humbleness wont' fall, but the humbleness rises from their falling them who have humbleness.

You must embrace the crying with the whole your heart, for the crying is the companion of the good work. Force yourself to cut off you will in all things, for this is reckoned as a sacrifice of the man. This is that what they told about: "For you we give ourselves to death all day long; we have been reckoned as stabbing sheep"[550] (Ps. 43: 24[551]). Do not allow yourself to become drowsy at meetings and discussions, because those ones won't let you advance towards God. You must torment your senses much: your sight, your hearing, your tasting, your touching, and you will advance by the grace of Christ. This is because one cannot reach to be martyr (witness) without torments. This is for the Lord too said: "into your patience you will gain your souls" (Lk. 21: 19). And the Apostle says: "into much patience, into troubles" (2 Cor. 6: 4). Take heed at not showing to Chaldeans the treasures of your house, because otherwise they will take you prisoner for Nebuchadnezzar the Emperor of the Babylonians (4 Kings[552] 25). Trample on your passions, by always thinking at this answer, in order you not to be powerfully trampled and tormented by your passions[553]. Run

[549] The humbleness maintains a gentle sensitiveness within man even towards his own being, even towards his own body, by knowing that his body is a full of mysteries organ given by God to the man in order the man's body to be the man's environment for manifesting clean sentiment and for doing good deeds. This is for the humbleness is the opposite to the rude naughtiness that defiles everything, that one that respects nothing because of understanding nothing form reality, and because of not seeing the presence of God in anything.

[550] Cutting off your will means stopping to live for yourself, it means sacrificing yourself. But the ego whom you live your egotistic passions through, it is a surface self, it is a self whom you do not live your deep through in your fullness and authenticity. This superficial ego must be killed in order your true subject to come out and enter the communion with God and with your fellow humans.

[551] In KJB we have: Ps. 44: 22: "Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter."; in ROB we have: Ps. 43: 24: "For You we are killed all day long, we have been like some sheep for stabbing." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[552] In KJB we have: 2 Kings. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[553] You either are trampled by passions, or you stand and keep your passions under your heel, and finally you will abolish your passions. The dispassionate man is the free eye, the strong man, the unbent men, the man that moves according to his true will. He stands even in front of God, for God doesn't enslave him but God loves him. The man bows down before God out of his love for God, and out of his gratitude for everything God has given and continues giving him. The man is servant of God not because of fearing God, and the man is in the same time a son that loves God in freedom. That slavery is the slavery of the son totally bestowed himself to the loving Father for his love.

aways from your passions as a stage runs aways from the nets, or your passions will tear you apart like on a lamb. But you fear them not, because they have no power. Our Lord Jesus Christ has weakened them down[554], and He has made them powerless. But you must not sleep. This is for, even though they are half-dead, they do not sleep. And do not get lazy because they do not get lazy either. Stretch your hand, for a little while, to your Fathers who want to pluck you out of the stinky mud[555]. Remember that "much can the working prayer of the righteous" (Jas. 5: 16).

Do not judge anybody (Mt. 7: 1); do not despise and do not offend anybody. Do not think about somebody things which you haven't seen at him. This is because these are towards the losing of your soul. Take heed and wait for your death to come. Tell to yourself the word of the blessed Arsenius: "Arsenius, why have you exit (the world)?" (Paterikon, Arsenius 40). Learn what have you come to search here for? Run towards Jesus so you to grab Him. If you want to be saved, you must quick up your pace, in order you to be in this good annunciation together with the Holy Fathers. If you want to advance, you must work. Crave for being together with the saints, glorified in the untold glory, and not together with the devils in the untold punishment. You must desire to be in the Kingdom of Heavens and not in the Gehenna of the fire. You must desire to hear: "Come, you the blessed of My Father" (Mt. 25: 35) and: "Well done, you good and faithful servant" (Mt. 25: 31), and you not to hear: "Go away from Me you cursed and lazy servant" (Mt. 25: 26, 41). Of the Lord is the glory forever. Amen.

257. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Having many sins, I wish to repent myself. But because of the helplessness of my body, I cannot impropriate the ascesis

[554] Our Lord Jesus Christ has weakened down the demons, and He strengthened the human nature from within Him, and thus He communicates this strength us too, on the ground of the communion of nature and of His love for us.

[555] The man has hands. The man is not like his animal or like his object that is take and handed over without shaking hands. Through hand it is shown the will for receiving help, for answering the helping love. Through hand it is shown the man's will for collaborating with him who wants to help him, to elevate him from the lower state which the man is in. The man cannot elevate himself from his inferior state, and ne neither can really be elevated unwillingly, for if that was the case the man wouldn't actually be souly elevated. The future husband "asks for the hand" of his future wife.

of the Fathers. Please tell me how can I set up a beginning? Command me, and tell me what does it mean that what you have told in another answer: "Do not show to Babylonians the treasures of your house, or you will be taken to slavery into Babylon".

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, there are some poor people blessed by our Lord (Mt. 5: 3). They are those who rejected their richesses, namely all their passions, and they have emptied themselves of those for the name of the Lord. These ones are the true poor and they have their happiness. And there are many poor who haven't achieved any good. These ones have been menaced by the Lord Who said: "Go away from me, you the cursed ones" (Mt. 25: 41). He who has such richesses and who is burdened by them, let him reject them and he will get rid of worries. So, if you want to set up a beginning, you must repent yourself. Learn what the debauched woman did, for she washed up with her tears the feet of the Master (Lk. 7: 38). The crying washes up the man of all his sins[556]. But the crying doesn't come to the man except through effort, by much occupying yourself with God, through patience, and by thinking at the fearful judgment and at the eternal shame[557]; and through self-rejection. This is for the Lord said: "He who wants to come to Me, let him reject himself and take his cross and follow Me" (Mt. 16: 24). And self-rejection means taking your own cross and cutting you will in all things and accepting to be disregarded by others.

And because you have told me that you suffer of your body's weakness and that you cannot do anything regarding that, I am advising you to cut off a little bread and a little wine, according to your power. This is for God received the two pennies of the widow and He rejoiced for that more than for all the other gifts (Mt. 12: 4). Learn the non-daring and you will be

[556] He who cries because he feels painfully sorry for his sins, he will soften his being, he will enter as true man the communication with God and with his fellow humans, and he will have existed the rigid and egotistic state of the sin, so that he will be like a new man. He has been washed up, and he has been removed from on himself the rust that has been keeping him callous and that has been covering his true face of true and communicative man. He has become a sensitive man who no longer can continues his insensitive life into sin.

[557] He who will be sent in hell at the final judgment, and his shameful deeds will be unveiled in front of everybody, and those deeds will no longer be covered by any sophisticated reasoning. The hell will also be the place of cynical ones who openly admit the ugly character of their deeds. Theya re resigned in a state of disgust admitted by all of them reciprocally.

saved. Keep the content of my previous answers, and this one, as the apple of your eye, and though the word: "Do not show you treasures to the Babylonians", I meant the devils, while you reckoned that I meant the people. This is because the devils see and they get mad against you and they wage war to you through your vain-gloriousness, and they wage war to the simple ones by offense. And you will be held responsible for both of those. But to them who can hear and keep these answers, these answers will be towards joy and benefit, but you must hide any good thing you do. This is for, if you do so, it will be beneficial to you[558]. May the Lord make you wise through the prayers of the saints. Amen.

258. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Pary for me, Father, because of being I much tormented by the thought of the fornication, of the fear, and of the drowsiness (of the boredom). When I see my brother whom I am being warred by, my thought tells me to have a word with him, lest, by not doing so, he will suspect something. And I feel how the devils disturb me and I fear that very much.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, the devils cause you thoughts of fear, of drowsiness, and of fornication, because you are not experienced in the wars from the enemy. You must stand strong with your heart before them. This is because the athletes won't be crowned if they do not fight; if they do not prove themselves as experienced in the wars for the emperor, they won't be glorified as it happened to David. I wonder, don't you sing from psalms: "Examine me, Lord, and test me. Ignite my entrails and my heart: (Ps. 25: 2[559]). And, again, don't you say: "If a war was started against me, I would still hope" (Ps. 26: 5-6[560])? And about fear he says: "Even if I walk in the middle of

[558] If you want to show your good deeds, you will humiliate others and you won't prove that Him Who has given you the power to do those deeds has been God. That's why, the Lord said: "When you will have been done all of these, say: We are worthless servants, for we have done what we owed to do".

[559] In KJB we have: Ps. 26: 2: "Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart."; in ROB we have" Ps. 25: 2: "Examine me, Lord, and test me; ignite my entrails and my heart." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[560] In KJB we have: Ps. 27: 3: "Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident."; in ROB we have: Ps. 26:

the shadow of death, I won't fear evil, for Youa re with me" (Ps. 22: 4[561]). And about drowsiness he says: "If the ghost that masters, comes upon you, you won't leave your place" (Eccl. 10: 4)[562]. Don't you want to be proven? "Because the unaccustomed (non-tempted) man is inexperienced" (Agrapha no. 90). The wars make the man proven[563].

This is the work of the monk: to endure the wars and to resist with the manhood of his heart[564]. But you must know that God doesn't allow the war and the temptation coming upon your more than you can endure them. This is what the Apostle teaches you by saying: "Faithful is God Who won't allow you to be tempted over your power" (1 Cor. 10: 13). I have been awfully tempted, brother, for many times, in my youth, by the devil of the fornication. But I tired myself fighting my thoughts and resisting them and toiling against them; this is for I put in front of my eyes the eternal torments. And by doing I this on every day for seven years, God alleviated me of them. This temptation is stopped by the ceaseless prayer accompanied by crying. And the disturbance is caused to you by the devils because of their envy. And if they could, they would banish you away even out of

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5-6: "If army was gathered against me, my heart wouldn't be scared; // If war was risen against me, I would hope in Him." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[561] In KJB we have: Ps. 23: 4: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."; in ROB we have: Ps. 22: 4-5: "For even if I walk in the middle of the death, I won't fear evil; for Youa re with me. // Your staff and Your rod caressed me." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[562] The devil attempts to take the man under his mastery, through all sins and passions. The man is called to fight in order to escape from any form of being mastered, in order the man – be removing any cover of the relatives things which can master upon him – the man to find the freedom of the full love, in unmediated communion with the absolute God, for God by being love He won't enslave the man, He won't actually master the man; when the man reaches to be under a mastery he will be separated from God, because of letting himself to be dominated by inferior forces which interrupt the man's connection with God.

[563] The proven man is a strong man. He will become strong if he resists his temptations. This is meaning of being proven. The Kingdom of Heavens belong to the strong men, to the proven men, who have reached to be unshakable by temptations of pleasure and of pain, and who do not let themselves be taken under mastery by anything, but they persevere in the communion of their free will with God.

[564] That man who has spiritually progressed, he is in the same time strong and sensitive; he as a heart full of manhood but also full of gentleness. He is strong or firm in his gentleness, in his kindness, and in his cleanness. He no longer has anything rude or trivial. And he is steadfast in this state. Of this consists his power and his gentleness, and his firm sensitiveness for everything that is good. "The love never falls", despite its gentleness, or on the measure of its gentleness. But this parados has one more meaning: the man who is spiritually advanced, he will be harsh on himself and gentle with others.

your monastic cell. But God doesn't allow them to take you into their mastery. That's why too they do not have power. God could quickly alleviate you, but if that was the case, you could not resist any other passion. So, do not allow yourself to be weakened by demons so that you to look at that face which you are tempted by, or to talk to that one, even if you met him unwillingly, you will look away fearfully and decidedly, and you won't surrender your hearing to his voice. And if that brother will start a discussion at his initiative, or if he sat next to you without knowing (that he actually temps you). You will skillfully leave him, decently, and without hurry. And you will tell to your thought: remember the fearful judgment of God, and remember that shame that will be suffered by them who do the ugly things. And you will fight against your thought. And you will find help in the prayer of the saints and God will have mercy of you. Do not be child in your mind, but "be child in evilness, and at mind be consummate" (1 Cor. 14: 20). Take heed, brother, at yourself, how will you answer to God.

259. The same one prayed the Gret Oldman, saying: Pray for me, Father, because I am miserable in all things, and I need much benevolence. This is because of being sown, within me, thoughts which tell me: "Go in a foreign place and there you will be saved. May God, for your prayers, not to allow them to take me into their mastery.

Answer: Brother, cursed is him who has sown such thoughts within your heart, so that you to transgress the commandments by leaving this place. This is the devil. This is because he does that in order to make you to show that you are right. And by doing that, he laughs at you, and he make you offence to many. That's why you must endure the judgment of these ones. And you suffer these things because of your laziness, and because of your vain-gloriousness. This is for you say: I leave for a foreign place I endure the reproach. But how comes that after you hearing a sole brother saying something against you, your heart gets troubled and you do not want somebody to find out that you have mistaken? The devils give birth within you together with your idleness also your vain-gloriousness, in order they to lose your soul. Be convinced, into the Lord, that fi there wasn't the hand of God and the prayer of

His true servants from here, you wouldn't be able to stay in this monastery even for a whole year. But because of you being bling, you can see this. You cannot see the benefaction done you by God, and that God does it through the prayers of the saints and of the blessed Abraham who told you and to you brother: "If you will persevere in this place, you will have me praying for you". My son, take heed at yourself with the whole your care and fight your thoughts, in order you not to become lazy, neither you to fall into vain-gloriousness, nor your will to make you stubborn in doing something. And do not receive the thoughts sown within you together with the urge of justifying yourself, because through that you will fall with a bid fall. Be convinced that wheresoever you leave for, you won't benefit as much as here. This is for the prayer of the Fathers from here it is to you as an anchor to a ship. Earn strength and banish away from you that daring that leads bring all evils withing man; and stop worrying about anything. And then you will be free for God. And you must die to anyone. This is the estrangement[565]. You must cherish being disregarded by others, and so you won't have your thought disturbed[566]. Do not reckon yourself as having done something good and so your payment will remain untouched[567]. And above all of these, you must remember that you won't tarry for long into your body. Strive for you to be able to say at that time: "I am ready and I am not

[565] Preferring a place instead of another, it means valuing the things form this world, it means reckoning that your salvation depends of a place or on a man from within world. God is everywhere. He who is intensely preoccupied with God, he won't need to change the places or the people, for he doesn't put passions in those. And you must ask God to die towards people in the meaning of not making yourself your happiness and your salvation dependent on them, neither you to look at their sins, or at the pleasures provided you by them or by what you can exploit in them. But this means, in the same time, you not to offend them, but you to good to them when appropriate, or you to be interested in their salvation; it means you not to be worldly interested in yourself.

[566] You won't be troubled by the thought of being disregarded. You will remain calm and you will be able to think at God instead of being agitated for yourself. You will have been elevated above your superficial self, and you will have found your true self.

[567] Do not seek for payment from people and you will have payment, namely do not seek for payment egotistically, and so you will have payment into the joy of your altruism, of your self-giving to God from Who it comes all the power of your altruism, into the joy of being yourself in communion with the ocean of the godlike joy that overflows in to all those who are open to God.

troubled" (Ps. 118: 60[568]). Brother, without effort there is no possibility to reach the life. And without fighting no one will be crowned. Fight, so that by fighting you to be saved, and God will help you, for He "wants all the people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2: 4). May God have mercy on you, so that you to zealously surrender yourself to His work. This is for God's I the mercy, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

260. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Father, what does it mean that what you said, that I wouldn't be able to remain into monastery even for one year? And pray for me to the Lord. This is because, immediately after I go to bed, the demon comes upon me and he chocks me up. I need the love for people.

The answer of Barsanuphius: That what I told you, that if there weren't the prayer of the Fathers you wouldn't remain into monastery even for one year, I told you as generally about monks. This is because not all the people from monastery are monks, but only him who does the things of a monk. This is for it was said: "Not everyone who tells Me Lord, Lord, will enter the Kingdom of Heavens, but him who does the will of My Fathers Who is in heavens" (Mt. 7: 21). Why are you mocking yourself, my miserable brother? This is because you ask but you do not persevere. But after asking, you tell others what you have found out from me, because you are searching for vain-gloriousness, by trying to be pleasant to people. And by that you are impeded from any progress. This is why, when you go to bed, you are tempted and the demon comes upon you and chokes you up. Because of this God allows you to be punished by removal, in order you to rebuke on yourself as monk. But you do not understand that, brother. This is the time given us in order us to examine our passions and to weep. When you sit in your monastic cell and you are submitted to temptations, you must rebuke on yourself in everything and you must throw your

[568] In KJB we have: Ps. 119: 60: "I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments."; in ROB we have: Ps. 118: 60: "I was ready and I wasn't troubled by keeping Your commandments." (E. l. t.'s n.)

helplessness in front of God. And God will help you and he will give you power in order you to advance into Him.

261. The question of the same one and the ask for prayer addressed to the other Oldman: For the name of the Lord, pray for me, in order I to be delivered from the reproachable passions and from the vain-glory, because they defile me in anything done by me and reckoned by me as good. And I pray you to tell me: what the purpose is for one to make the remembrance of the saints? And how can one remove the evil had by him in himself?

The answer of John: If you want yourself to be delivered of the reproachable passions, you will have to cut off from yourself all your daring towards any man; and especially towards those ones whom you see your heart inclining towards, because of your lust. By that you will also be freed of your vain-gloriousness. This is for the vain-glory is the companion of your desire for being pleasant to people. And the desire of being pleasant to people is the companion of the daring. And the daring is the seal of all those passions[569]. And him who does the remembrance of the saints without vain-glory, by reckoning that he does that at the urge from God and f not form himself, he will become partaker with the saints and he will take payment from their Master[570].

And that what helps somebody to get out the evil he has within himself, it is his care for the salvation of his soul and his love for God and his sincere repentance.

Listen, my son, and out of the shown things you must understand the unshown things. When you have certain suffering into your body, you restrain yourself form the things which harm you; why then, you don't fight to restrain yourself form the things which harm your soul? In that case too, it is

[569] The daring is contrary to shyness and to the respect for the man's mystery. The daring crosses over the man in a rude manner as over an object. The daring tempts the weak one, and it plays him shamelessly, and it deluded him, and it exploits him.

[570] He takes the payment form the Lord of the saints for he remembers those who are loved by Him. This is for, by doing that, he who does it enters the communion with them, he enters the union with them, and he will be imparted at his turn with the love for people had by God for His saints. If God loves the people while they still are sinners, and that's why God wants to save them, all the more God will love them who do His will out of obedience to and out of love for Him.

required much suffering and pain, as the Apostle says: "I oppress my body and I drove it like on a slave" (1 Cor. 9: 27). You use your power and God will help you by the prayers of the saints[571]. This is for God is thirsty for seeing our salvation, for He sworn on Himself that He "doesn't want the death of the sinner but him to turn back and to be alive" (Ezek. 18: 23).

Much power ascends from this place due to the prayers of the true servants of God, for all of us; this is for I am convinced that God doesn't shame them up. You too must add you two pennies and you will rejoice Him as that widow did. And tie your small boat to the Father's ship, and they will stir you towards Jesus[572] Who can grant humbleness, power[573], understanding, crown, and gladness. Amen.

262. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Because I am younger and mindless and a responsibility was appointed to me, please, Father, ask on my behalf, firstly, for understanding, in order I to be able to do that job as I should, and I not to say any word and to keep my silence at the right time and I to call for God and for your prayers in the things I doubt about, in order I to be helped not to get strayed.

The answer of Barsanuphius: It is a great joy when somebody asks for a thing in the fear of God. This one will dare

[571] God and the prayers of the saints actively collaborate to the man's striving.

[572] From a monastery there ascend intertwined, and continuously, the prayers of the inhabitants towards God. This makes each of them present in the general prayer in a special manner. This prayer of everyone unites all of them together and with God. Here the catholicity (in the Romanian language is: *sobornicitate*; in our view it essentially means the characteristic of functioning like a community or people in communion; we haven't been able to find any other traductological solution to this word originating from Slavonic (E. l. t.'s n.)) of the Church is accomplished in an especially accentuated manner. And in it there doesn't take place only a union of the monastery's inhabitants, but that union take place also with the saints and with the people living in the world, who are remembered in their prayers. A similar place is also any church where the believers perform often prayers in common and where are remembered the saints, the dead, the kinships, and the acquaintances of those who are attend the religious service. Your prayer, by entering this powerful ascending current of the common prayer, it will be brought as well to God by that common current.

[573] The power given us by Christ it will become our power, and that implies also an effort of ours. One cannot separate the power of Christ from our effort, or the gifts from Chris from our virtues.

(to think) that his ask will be fulfilled[574]. But listen to me, brother! If you ask for see for your field, you must cultivate your field and prepare it for receiving the seed. This is for the all-good and cultivated field it is said that it gave "a hundred" fruits for one seed (Mk. 4: 8). Regarding the duty of not impeding my power so that I could do as much as I can, I won't impede it for the commandment of God, but I confess my weakness of not being able to bestow as much as it is required. That's why I am a worthless. But if you believe so, you will take by your faith not only that much as I am able to bestow you according to my measure, but you will take as much as you need[575]. This is for God knows what you need even before you ask for that (Mt. 6: 8)[576]. So, you must not doubt, and I believe that God will give you not for me but for your faith. Before all, you must humble yourself before God. This is "For to the humble He gives grace" (Prov. 3: 34) into Christ Jesus our Lord Whom it is due the glory forever. Amen.

263. The same one asked the other Oldman: How should I use the meaning of this answer from the Great Oldman?

If you want to find out how you should use the meaning of this answer of the Great Oldman, this is the following: When you want to speak or to do something, you should remember

[574] This daring towards God is something else than the daring towards people. This kind of daring doesn't mean the conscience of your superiority, or superficiality, because who could reckon himself, if he cogitates at himself in a serious manner, as superior to God, and who could remain in such superficiality? This king of daring is the trust of the son in the love of his father; this kind of daring is the trust of the spiritual man that God will escape him from the surrounding trouble. This kind of daring is a daring accompanied by fear, or accompanied by the admission of the endless power and love of God, power and love which must not be despised.

[575] God asks from us only that much as we can give. But we do not bestow even that much as we could, because of our drowsiness caused by our will. Actually, we do not want to give as much as we can. Even if I gave as much as I could, even that would be much less than I need for being cleaned of my sins, or for my salvation. But the mercy of God fulfills not only that what I cannot actually give, but also that what it misses from what I actually can give. One is only asked to believe in God's generosity. This is the daring of the faith. And God will give us, due to our faith, not only on the measure of our faith but as much as we need.

[576] God gives us even more than we ask Him for, because we do not even know what we need. The father gives to his child more than the child suspects in his unskilled ask. This is for the father knows better what the child needs. God is satisfied with us manifesting our conscience that all the things come from Him.

the name of the Great Oldman and God will sow within your heart that what you should do or speak. But do that with humbleness, so that you won't lose this gift[577].

264. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: You have had mercy, Father, on my weakness and you have given me the advice that in everything I will say or I will do, I to call upon the name of God and for your prayers. By following I this advice, behold that I am being filled up with good and I am forcing myself to work and to speak according to His will. But sometimes, because of my laziness, it happens to me to forget about this. That's why, I pray you to ask me watchfulness from God, and Him not to allow me to go astray according to my will. I also pray you for, because after I call upon the name of God and for your prayers, I still hesitate about how should I work or not work, tell me what should I do in the end? And again, if it happens to me I to be asked about something before I am able to call upon God, or before I can think at what I should say, because I am asked for a quick answer, what should I do in such cases? And I am also asking you to pray for me so that I would be able to control my eyes, for they often wander all around.

Answer: If somebody receives a commandment or an answer form the Fathers regarding something, and because of his forgetfulness of laziness he doesn't fulfill that commandment of that advice, if he realized that he has mistaken, he must repent and God will forgive him. But why have you written me, brother, only about watchfulness? I am praying for all the good gift to be bestowed to you and for all gifts to remain with you forever. And if it happens to you to do a thing after you have called upon God and after you have asked for the prayer of the saints but you have still remained in doubt, you should do that thing, for that is the will of God, and I will pray to God for that thing. And if, by being asked, you are required to answer immediately, due to the fact that nothing moves so quickly as the mind does, you will send your mind to

[577] You should think at the Great Oldman and that will make you realize how he would work or how he would think and you should force yourself, by the power of God, to do the same as the Great Oldman would do.

God and God will give you what you should answer without worrying[578].

That what guards the eyes from wandering and the whole man from any evil, it is the humbleness. The humbleness is one of the great gifts which I told you about that I am asking for you, if you add your power too. Take heed at yourself and God Himself will give you His hand and He will have mercy on you[579].

265. The ask of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: I pray you, all-merciful Father, take heed at the blindness of my soul. And I pray you again for you to ask for me for the light within my heart, in order I to be able to discern between the right-reckoning and the judgment that is hiddenly twisted; for I fear to trust it[580]. This is for I often see myself not realizing that I am passionately presenting something to somebody. And I have examined my thought in order I to see if my thought likes do present a thing in that manner, through another, without admitting that I myself presented that thing in that manner to somebody and he didn't like that. It also happens to me that when I start doing of telling something, I do not do that passionately, but meanwhile, my thought get sweetened by that thing. What should I do, me the wicked? But the work of this passion upsets me in another way too, or better said my loving of glory heart. This is because it happens to me that some brother talks to me about something and before that thing being done by

[578] God Whom your mind can immediately connect with, He will make you to answer in a balanced and full of responsibility manner, the question you are asked.

[579] If you do not take heed at yourself, if you are scattered in all sorts of things, you won't be able to meet God and you cannot catch the help He gives you, in order you to progress spiritually. Such a man has no humbleness, because he doesn't meet the greatness of the power of God within the mystery of his being.

[580] The Greek term λογισμοσ has both the meanings as *thought* and as *reasoning*, both of them imply also a preference for good or for evil. That's why there can be also a twisted judgment, one hiddenly meandering, but having at surface an appearance of justice and of logics. Even him who formulates it, he partially realizes that his judgment, apparently right, it is hiddenly cunning, deceiving, and twisted. The spiritual Fathers of the East were very preoccupied with the means which one can discern with between these twisted judgments and the right judgments.

other, my thought united with those and it gets sweetened as being understood with my mind[581].

The answer of Barsanuphius: Without the tiredness of the heart, one cannot reach to discern among thoughts[582]. So, I am praying to God for Him to give that to you. Let your heart get a little tired and God will give you that what you are asking for. And it is the same regarding all of these. When God will bestow you this gift, you will discern by his Ghost, and with the prayers of the saints, and with the painful tiredness of your heart, your thoughts from one another. And when you see a thing that brings you a thought, you will keep your silence, as you have heard from my true son into God[583], whom you must obey to, regarding any of your thoughts. This is for he doesn't speak to you from himself, but that what God bestows him towards the benefit of each of you. May God cover you and may God give you power to be silent in all things and may God give you grace for you to know when you must speak passionlessly. This is because of your heart not consummately knowing that these things defile the man. This is because, otherwise, your heart won't allow you to get sweetened by them.

266. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: The great mercy that you have for me the sinner, it makes me again daring to disturb you. Enlighten me on how should my heart toil in order the gif of the discernment to come within my heart. Explain me, Father, regarding the ceaseless remembrance of God, if you reckon me as worthy; and give me power for it. This is because my thought causes me fear by telling me that I won't be able to maintain that. Because of that, I pray

[581] It is in these phrases about the passion of the vain-glory. he who prays to be advised, he expressed the fact that when he tells something or when the does something, he feels that he connects the fulfilling of that thing to his pride of telling or doing that. Then he mentions that he sees others doing the same, by mixing their pride in what they say and do, while he doesn't admit that he does the same. Finally, we can notice how, by showing that he understands what another tells him, and in that too he manifests his pride.

[582] Once a crooked judgment or a crooked thought cannot be discerned by a right judgment or by a right thought, but only by theoretical grounds and by the love for evil hiddenly tied to the crooked judgment or to the crooked thought, the Lord can reckon these ones as right only by the fight of detaching the heart from its hidden connection to the evil, and only thus the crooked judgment of thought can be exposed.

[583] From Abba Serid.

you, Master, show me whether this thing is beneficial to me. This is for I believe that, immediately the word comes out of your mouth, it will give birth to power within my heart.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Tiring your heart means that you always pray to God for Him not to let you wandering, or waling according to your own wills. By that you will come to discerning among your thoughts (to the right-reckoning). Regarding the ceaseless remembrance of God, or about occupying yourself with God, you must set only the beginning and do not fear, for God will strengthen you and He will give you power. You only must sow trustingly, so that you will reap without getting weak. Blessed Is God Who blesses you to put the beginning and He will give power in order you to persevere according to your measure.

267. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: For on other occasions too, it has come to me a little warmth for a few days, and then it has stopped, and I have kept the memory of that warmth for an hour with pleasure and for another hour forcedly, I am afraid by mu thought lest, as before, that little warmth not to leave me and I to lose my soul totally, I pray you, you kind Father, do not forsake me and show me what is that that banishes this memory and the warmth away from me. Aks for me also the guarding of my senses, because of many times being I enslaved by them, and especially when my heart searches for an occasion for that. This is because of this one, when carries by a certain purpose, it springs out of itself passionate or insane thoughts, or thoughts which are inappropriate at that time. That's why I am praying you, you powerful Father into the Lord, bestow me, to your servant, watchfulness, in order I to understand the thoughts entering my heart, so that I will know what to do with those thoughts, in order those thoughts not to separate me form your blessing. Clarify me also this aspect: if I do or it I tell some word which I am into, as it seems to me, shunned from sin by God, must I, after I have finished that, to give thanks to God? And does that lead me to the love for God? Or I must not receive, by any means, the thoughts that I have avoided the sin, but I rather must search for my mistake in what I've said and in what I've done, and consequently to ask for forgiveness for that?

The answer of Barsanuphius: You must toil into the pain of your heart to earn these and God will give them to you ceaselessly, I mean the warmth and the prayer. This is because of being the forgetfulness the one banishing them away from you. And the forgetfulness is born out of carelessness. Regarding the guarding of your senses, you must know that every gift is given through the tiredness of your heart. And the gift of the watchfulness doesn't allow the thought to enter your mind. And even if they enter, your watchfulness wont' allow them to hurt you. May God give you your watchfulness and your vigil[584]. This is for, there is a commandment that tells us: "give thanks in everything" (1 Thes. 5: 18); but especially in that what you have showed to me. But is it also useful to examine your thoughts and you to ask for forgiveness.

268. The ask of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: I pray you, holy Father, ask for me power from God, because that what I command to myself when alone, when I meet the brothers I reject that, and I am afraid lest by getting habituated to sin and by remaining only to the sorrow but without correcting myself, I will persists in my sins and I will die. I know that are beneficial to me the troubles intertwined with the passions, for they crush the callousness of my soul; and may that not be to me, the mindless, I to desire alleviation from those. But I pray you, Father, help me with your prayers, for, it that

[584] The watchfulness and the vigil are the ceaseless attention paid by you to yourself, so that no thoughts which is doubtful regarding it quality won't enter your mind. But those are also a continuous conscience about God, one united with the prayer. This is because the man cannot ceaselessly remain in this watchfulness only by his own power. The watchfulness is not only an attention having a negative purpose: namely that of not accepting the inappropriate thoughts, but it is also a positive work: a ceaseless hanging of the thought on God. And this too, it cannot be sustained only by our own power, but it has as its basis a sentiment of responsibility, which is not imposed to us by ourselves, btu it is upheld within us especially by God. And in that sentiment of our responsibility, we also live the just relation between us and God, we live our true position, or we are aware of what we actually are. You cannot know himself if you do not position yourself exactly where you actually are, as in case of those who do not know about God. This is for, to know what you are it means knowing your relationships with the supreme source of your existence.

could be beneficial to me, I not to ceaselessly be defeated[585] *and my heart not to constantly suffer because of that.*

Answer: Let no one to tell someone: "Don't worry, I am taking care of you". This is because he will transgress his promise. Also, he who is tied with that burden must add a little perseverance, and he must do everything he can in order him to guard with watchfulness the commandments of his Fathers. And if he falls once, he will get up again. And I trust God that, even if a brother has been kidnapped once, if that brother strives himself again, he won't fall into habituation or into indifference. But God will bring him again into the group of those who strive and God won't let his soul until God will elevate his soul to the high measure, to the consummate man (Eph. 4: 13). So, do not get yourself drowsy, but you must work as long you still have time ahead. Be obedient, obey, and God will come to your help, God Who "to the humble ones He gives them grace, and to the proud ones He stays against them" (Prov. 3: 20). You must say ceaselessly: "Jesus help me", and He will help you. May God liberate your soul from the reproachable passions, my son.

269. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: I bow down before you, you merciful Father and doctor of my ill soul. Woe to me, for what you have showed me and for what target you are dragging me towards; and woe to me because of where I am tied to, by my bad habit. Even if I am untied for a little while, I will again turn back towards spreading and towards receiving[586]*. And if I wasn't ashamed by God's*

[585] He who asks realizes that the temptation through passions and the torment of fighting those passions, it means a continuous menace; still, he prays not for his struggle to come to an end, and so him not to be defeated by passions through the temptations the passions stir up, so that he not to fall into the callousness caused by passions. He better remains into the torment of the fight. The man can have his soul always conscious of the danger which he is in, when fighting the passions, or when he reached to be totally above passions. But to this state doe not reach except those consummated in a long fight. They no longer fight. No light comes out of their self, or they self is not shown. They are totally buried. They who are not totally buried by passions but they fight on each time when tempted in order they not to fall under their power, they defend their self against the total burial, or they gain the power to keep their self still uncovered by continuously fighting the temptations of the passions.

[586] To spread the evil to others and to receive the evil from others and from demons, it means not being liberated form them, or it means being liberated only a little and from time to time.

kindness and by your mercy, because I know through hos much toils you have brought me to your feet, I would end in despair. This is for, while I am covered through your prayers, I am walking in peace. But when I unwrap myself a little[587]*, in order my will to be shown, I am immediately defeated. When sitting in the morning in my monastic cell, it comes to me the thought to bring an answer to somebody, and so I go out. And after fulfilling that task, I no longer want to turn back, but motives occur to me, according to which it could be untied even without me, until I get hurt. And so, I tune back to my monastic cell only in the evening, with disgust and with darkening and with souly discontent, not knowing what I should do. That's why, forgive me holy Father, before your heart that sees all the things. Be with me, according to your will, as you want to and as you know to. This is because I do not know what to tell you, except: forgive me for God.*

Answer: Brother, it is inappropriate you to lose your hope because of these things, as the helmsman of a ship hit by waves doesn't lose the hope for his salvation, but he rather stirs the ship until he brings it to a shore. You too, by being you enslaved and troubled by something, you must thing at the beginning of the trip, saying with the prophet: "And I said, I am starting now" (Ps. 76: 11[588]). Examine if the things can be done by brothers or by you[589]. And lo, you are again on the road. This is for, taking care of yourself while thinking at God, it is a spiritual work committed according to the soul's salvation. And you must work according to your power, lest some unimportant things to get you out of your monastic cell, at an inappropriate time. This is because of being this a devilish plot. Take heed at yourself wisely, and God will help you through the prayers of the saints. Amen.

270. The ask of the same one towards the same Great Oldman, asking him to bear his sins.

[587] It will be good to me if I do not unwrap myself from the care for me of a spiritual father and from the help from God.

[588] In KJB we have: Ps. 77: 11: "I will remember the works of the Lord: surely I will remember thy wonders of old."; in ROB we have: Ps. 76: 11: "I have remembered the things of the lord and I will remember your wonders, from the beginning." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[589] Examine if you need the help form the brothers in order you to get rid of temptations.

Answer: Brother, despite you are asking me something that is above my powers, I am still going to show you the measures of the love that it forces itself to ascend above his own measures[590]. I am amazed of your person (of your ask) and I accept bearing it[591]. But I'll do this with the condition that you too bear and guard my words and my commandments. This is for those are savior and, by guarding them, you will live uncovered by shame[592].

271. The ask of the same one towards the same Great Oldman about the commandments told him by the Great Oldman; and the ask for him to be empowered to keep those commandments[593].

Answer: He Who empowered our Fathers, may Him empower you too, brother, and you love, and may Him give you understanding in order you to understand all the things. But you must guard your tongue against speaking vainly, and you must guard your belly from pleasure, and you must guard your neighbor against your anger. You must earn the non-daring, the self-non-appreciation, the love for everything, and the keeping of God within your mind, by thinking that you will once appear in front of God. You must have these things within you, and your field will bring hundredfold fruits to God Whose to be the glory forever. Amen.

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[590] The man's love, on one hand it has a measure, but on the other hand it strives to ascend above its measure, by sipping up out of immeasurable love of God.

[591] The person of the man having in his face his concentrated expression, it is a mystery which, despite all its bluntness, it still amazes him who has been elevated out of the blunt state of the passionate man. That's why, despite all his sins, the person of the brother urges the Great Oldman to take his person upon himself, to fight for his person, to suffer for his person, in order the Great Oldman to get the brother's person too out of the destructive bluntness which he is in.

[592] The spiritual man takes upon himself him who still is weak, but the spiritual man doesn't take the weak man as an object, or the spiritual man doesn't bring the weak man to salvation as on an object, or to that state liberated from passions of a fully accomplished person. But the spiritual man does that while helped by him who be bears upon himself, the borne one must do everything he can for liberating himself from the slavery of his passions and for reaching the state of a true man, or an accomplished and free person.

[593] This is a continuous exchange of asks. No one reckons himself able to fulfill anything without the another and without God Who is the ultimate source of power.

272. Question: What does it mean, Father, the self-non-appreciation?

Brother, the self-non-appreciation means one not reckoning himself equal to somebody and not saying about some good thing: "I did that"[594].

273. The ask of the same one towards the same Great Oldman, to help him in his repentance for transgressing the commandments given to him. And a question: how must he repent? And if transgressed, would the testament be abolished?

Answer: In the name of God, regarding your request, may it be as you asked it. Guard yourself from now on, in order you not to cogitate great things about yourself, lest you will lose everything[595]. And when you transgress a commandment, you run to repentance. And you must not despise that as you would have a bandage for your wound, lest you will end into even heavier states[596]. By uniting your hand with my hand, my testament on your behalf will remain assured. If not, how will God have mercy on you so that you to obey and to guard my advices into Christ? Amen.

274. The same one towards the same Great Oldman: The ask for prayer, for not to be separated from the protection of the Great Oldman either in the future age.

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[594] The self-non-appreciation is a detachment from one's self, it is a non-preoccupation with one's won value, and accepting such an attitude towards you also from others. The self-non-appreciation has meaning only in the acute conscience of your relationship with God. This is for only in relationship with God you reckon that everything that you are and do, you actually ow that to God, and that God knows what He does for you and how much zeal you have put into that gift bestowed to you by God. That gives you a continuous peace, a non-disturbance, consequently to the fact that your value is not recognized by others. You are free both of you and of others' opinion. You reckon only God as a right judge.

[595] When you imagine yourself as a great thing, you cannot see the truly great reality, that great and rich reality that is God, and you no longer are in communication with God's reality. You narrow yourself to your limits.

[596] Get out of the self-perdition, out of your superficiality, by repenting yourself, lest you will sink even more in the void.

Answer: If you understood my sayings, son, you could find out that I have given you a downpayment for your soul's salvation. So, you must not reckon that I am wrong, neither that I want to separate you from my true sons who will be saved, or from God. But you too must strive not yourself to part with such a life. This is for neither the Apostle separated somebody, but he said: "And if the unbeliever separates himself, let him separate" (1 Cor. 7: 15). But may this not to be in case of yourself, but you have been told, towards assurance, you to take heed at yourself and you to strive not to fall off the waiting from this or to fall off the hope, so that you must strengthen yourself into the Lord Who told His disciples to take power from above (Lk. 24: 40).

275. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: When somebody reckons himself as beneath all creation, but his living doesn't match that, what can one say about that?

Answer: When the living of somebody matched his reckoning about himself, neither that would be true, but it would a deceit from the devils.

276. Of the same one towards the same one: Father, when I not only reckon myself beneath all creation but, by examining my conscience I am compelled by my conscience too to reckon myself as beneath all creation, then too are the devils mocking me?

Answer: Now, brother, you have started to walk a little straight. This is for the truth consists of this conscience. But, may God bring you to the consummate measure of reckoning yourself actually beneath all creation[597]. Be strong into the Lord!

[597] It is not about the man reckoning himself as less valuable than all the mineral, vegetal, and animal creation, but less valuable than the whole mankind. And to reckon himself beneath the power that has created and that upholds the world. But there is within world too, a power and an order that exceeds immeasurably my power of producing it.

277. The question of the same one towards the same one: What is the savior path: that one through toils, or that one through humbleness? And about forgetfulness.

The answer of John: Brother, the true toil is not without humbleness. This is because, the toil in itself, it is vain[598]. This is for he says: "See my humbleness and my toil and forgive all my sins" (Ps. 24: 18[599]). Therefore, he who has both of those he will reach quickly. And he who has his humbleness united with his self-non-appreciation, he will achieve the same result. This is for the self-non-appreciation keeps the place for toils. And him who has only the humbleness, he will enter too, but with tardiness. So, he who wants to keep the true humbleness let him not appreciate himself in anything. This is the true humbleness.

He who receives the fire which God has come to throw it on earth, he doesn't know about forgetfulness or about being taken into slavery, for he is always sensing that fire[600]. Take, for instance, the material fire. If a man is dying but the fire is brought close to him, that man will immediately feel the pain. And in anything, if the man forgets about himself but he is touched with a piece of lit charcoal, he won't remain even for an instant in that self-forgetfulness. The fire, brother, it wouldn't get quenched, because if it was so that wouldn't be fire. If you

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[598] A toil without humbleness will make the man to attribute to himself, as last source, the power of having fulfilled his deeds, namely to deny his deeds' provenance from God. In humbleness is the conscience of the man having everything from God, namely his power too that he has shown into his toils. If there was not this conscience, there wouldn't be also humbleness, or the humbleness would be purposeless. Why would I get humble in front of a world which I am one with, in a pantheistic meaning? I cannot get myself humble except in front of a conscience endowed with the power of creating all the realities, consequently me too, and whom I know that I am depending on in everything. Where there is the gentleness of the humbleness, there is also the conscience about God. Otherwise, there would be justified any rude arrogance, with all the conflicts such an arrogance would bring.

[599] In KJB we have: Ps. 25: 18: "Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins."; in ROB we have: Ps. 24: 19: "See my humbleness and my toil and forgive me all my sins." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[600] The forgetfulness is like being taking prisoner by the passions of by the unseen ghosts who ignite those passions. This is because him who forgets about himself, he will be taken by passions there where he doesn't want to. The true freedom is tightly united with the self-consciousness, and the self-consciousness is one with the conscience of the man's absolute dependency on the Person-like God, so that the self-consciousness is one with the humbleness, with the conscience of the man's true position within reality. And the conscience of man's dependency on God is like a continuous fire keeping the man awake, it is like a continuous spiritual burning.

want to be yourself delivered from forgetfulness and for being taken into slavery, you won't be able to do it except by gaining the spiritual fire. This fire will melt away those ones. And this fire can be gained by somebody by longing for God. Brother, if your heart doesn't painfully toil to search for the Lord, you won't be able to progress. But if you occupy yourself with these ones, you will reach there. This is for he says: "Occupy yourself and know" (Ps. 45: 10[601]). May the Lord give you to understand these ones and may Him give you to toil with them.

278. The question of the same one towards the same one:" Father, what the humbleness is? And what the self-non-appreciation is? And what the crushing of the heart is? Can one gain the humbleness by despising on himself within his heart? Or, are there necessary also the condemnations from outside, those coming from people? And must him who is humble to talk humbly and to do humble things?

Answer: The humbleness is the self-non-appreciation in all the deeds and it is the cutting off of the own will in all the things. But the humbleness is also receiving the things coming from outside while remaining untroubled[602]. This is the true humbleness which the vain-glory doesn't find any room into. But he who is humble in thought he must not search for a humble way of speaking. But it suffices him to say: "Forgive me, or Pray for me". Neither he must run by himself after humble deeds. This is for both of those cause the vain-gloriousness and they do not allow somebody to progress[603]. But the progress consists of accepting to be commanded without resisting. And the despising is of two kinds: one coming out of your heat, and one coming from the condemnations brought to you from outside. But it is superior that one coming to you from outside.

[601] In KJB we have: Ps. 46: 10: "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth."; in ROB we have: Ps. 45: 10: "Stop and know that I am God, I will extoll Myself on earth." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[602] All the egotistic twitching, all the inferior impulses, all the trials coming from outside and wanting top dominate you, all of them are defeated by humbleness. The humbleness is the consummate freedom through the communion with God. The humble one doesn't know except about God, but he intensely feel God and a partner of communion in freedom.

[603] Searching for having a humble way of speaking, it means risking to be admired by others for that way of speaking. It is likewise in case of running for humble things or deeds.

This is because that one coming out of your heart doesn't require you so much effort in enduring it, while that one coming form other people causes a bigger pain to your heart. And the crushing of your heart means guarding your heart[604].

279. The questions of the same one towards the same one: If somebody is praised by somebody else, it will he do good is he doesn't answer that?

Answer: Keeping one's silence when he is praise it is more beneficial. This is because, if he answered, he would accept that praising. And that what is shown as modesty in the answer, it will actually be vain-gloriousness[605]. This is for the things said by the praised one about himself, if those things were said by somebody else, he wouldn't endure them[606].

280. The question of the same one towards the same one: But it could happen that that one imagines, because of my silence, that I accepted his praises, and so he would get offended. What should I do, therefore?

The answer of John: He who lives in ascesis must allow God to be the One Who makes the unseen things known him who hears. This is for, where that one who is praised could know that him who praises him wouldn't learn more out of his silence, a silence like the silence of one who doesn't accept the

[604] Guarding the heart against all the feelings and against all the superficially-pleasant things, which are always ready to steal your heart on any moment, it is a continuous pain imposed by yourself to your heart. But enduring that pain is, in the same time, a higher joy.

[605] Answering with modesty, you want or you risk, also, to attract the admiration for the modesty you display.

[606] When answering a praise with the words: "I am not quite so", or "I haven't done such a big thing", if those words were said by somebody else but in that case, you couldn't stand them, but by being said by yourself you can stand them, it means that you do not tell those words by really believing them, but you actually say those expecting to be contradicted. Only then you refuse the praises with a real modesty, when you are able to not get offended by hearing somebody talking about you contrary things. Namely, when it is equal to you whether one speaks positively or negatively about you. In such a case you would be in total objectivity regarding yourself. But by seeing yourself as somebody else sees you, it is easier to be objective with yourself than with another. And only your objectivity regarding yourself will show you totally free even from yourself.

praises, and that the one who praises would be offended? And if he explained that to him who praises him, let him explain that with humble cogitation, by saying: "Forgive me, brother, because I do not see any good in me and that's why I didn't find anything to answer you. But pray for me, for the Lord".

281. Of the same one towards the same one: But it happens that someone who is sinner to tell the truth out of humble cogitation and not because of his vain-gloriousness. Mustn't this one too give any answer"?

The answer of John: neither this one must answer, even if for the moment he would answer due to his humble cogitation. This is because of him who hear him could reckon him as humble, and that would bring him burden. This is for the Lord, by saying: "Woe, to you, when the people will speak good of you" (Lk. 6: 26). He says that about the sinners who are praised, and who didn't do the deed which they are praised for[607].

282. The question of the same one towards the same one: But how comes that we find out that some of the saints after they were praised, they answered with modesty?

Answer: The Fathers reached that measure which the Lord told about: "When you will have done all these things, you will say that worthless servants you are" (Lk. 17: 10). And by truly reckoning on themselves as being so, the answer how they actually reckon on themselves. This is for, even if they hear these from another, they won't get upset, but they bless that one for telling the truth[608].

[607] Not even a sinner who didn't do or who doesn't' have the quality which he is praised for, he must not answer and he must refuse to accept an unjust praise, even if he would accept that praise because of humble cogitation. This is for he could be admired for his humbleness and that would be a new temptation to him, by determining him to think about himself as being humble in all circumstances. This is because, even if he was humble on that moment, he must not reckon himself as having the humbleness as a permanent quality.

[608] The measure of the true humbleness is that of reaching such an objectivity towards yourself, so that you could see on yourself as others see you, even though those do not see you correctly, and even than you not to hiddenly defend on yourself.

283. The question of the same one towards the same one: If somebody sharing some benefactions to somebody, the beneficiary thanks him for the benefactions he received, in such a case won't the benefactor answer him either?

Answer: The silence is goof in all things. But in order him not to seem that he rejects the thanks, he must say humbly: "Forgive me, Abba, and pray for me for the Lord", and he must cogitate in his heart as he hasn't done anything. This is for Him Who does any good to everyone is the Lord. And he must pray God not to condemn him for the said things.

284. Of the same one towards the same one: Pray for me, Father, in order I to be delivered from my tongue, for my daring, and form my belly.

Answer: Regarding your tongue, your belly, and your daring, as you asked me to pray for, you too must do everything you can in order to restraint yourself. This is because without effort, without watchfulness, and without the crying with the whole heart, those ones cannot be restraint. Remember that "much can the prayer of the righteous" (Jas. 5: 16). But all the passion are mastered through humbleness. And one achieves humbleness by effort. May God give you, brother, power united with the gift of the discernment and with the fear of God.

285. The question of the same one towards the same one: "If these ones, as you said, can be achieved through crying, how can I guard the crying while going out and meeting people and taking care of fulfilling tasks and serving? And it is there a crying without tears?

The answer of John: Not the crying comes through tears but the tears come through crying[609]. And the crying will be

[609] The tears are the exteriorization of the sadness, or of the inward pain. But there can be also tears without so much pain, as there also can be a great interior pain without tears. Not the tears are the ones changing the man but the pain for his previous mistakes can change him. But in tears one starts feeling also the mercy from God. The tears also show an emotion produced by the mercy from God. That's why the tear bring also an alleviation; the tears are

achieved also by somebody living among people, if he cuts his will and if he doesn't take heed at somebody else's mistakes. This is for by doing so, he will gather his thoughts together. And by getting his thought gathered together, they will give birth to that sadness according to God and that sadness will bring him tears[610].

284. The question of the same one towards the same one: When I unveil my thought to Abba, I feel that some brothers get upset because of that. What should I do? Am I not complaining while sitting (inside), and doesn't mock me that thought urging me to that in order I to take heed at myself? And then, even if by the fact that you cover me, I am pursuing this purpose, will I be able to bring this thing to an end since, because I am weak, I hate my passions? Because of this, I pray you, if you think that that would be good, please not to mix me in businesses from outside the infirmary[611], let because of this people to end envying me and so I to be shaken. But if I am useful by that, my soul will be in your hands. Show me, Father, what do you command me?[612]

Answer: If you spoke out of a clean heart and for benefit and without passion and without vain-glory, you should not take heed at the people's words. You must fight, with the help form the prayers of the saints, until you will reach to do anything without being harmed. And trying to mix into the people's businesses passionlessly, it is good. This is for not all

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like a rain downloading the dark cloud and scattering the darkness. That's why the eyes which cried will become serene, clean, while the eyes of him who is focused on his inward pain reflect the "darkness" of his pain, or maybe of his turning to evil. But one can reach the second state only by crossing through the first state. But one must reach the second state.

[610] The gathering of one's thoughts it means directing the cogitation towards the own self, it means exiting the scattering towards the external things. By gathering his thought towards himself, the man reaches to discover himself, to unveil to himself his committed mistakes, and he will see his conscience burdened by those mistakes. Form here it starts the sadness and the interior crying.

[611] Dorotheos who asked the question, he was appointed to the leading of the infirmary from the monastery. (See *The Romanian Philokalia*¸ volume 9, *Introduction to the Teachings of Abba Dorotheos*).

[612] The Oldman is asked by Dorotheos if Dorotheos should talk to Abba (to hegumen Serid) about the problems of other inhabitants of that monastery; lest that thing to stir up others to envy him. Would it be good if he mixed in others' businesses, due to the influence he had on Abba?

of them can speak directly to Abba, neither such a thing would be good. So, if you speak out of God, you won't speak from yourself. But good is in all things and the good from God won't elicit envy, and even if such an envy will occur for a short while, it will disappear quickly. The souls of all of us are in the hands of God. And God is The One Who covers us and Who strengthens us to do what is beneficial.

285. Of the same one towards the same one: I wonder if I reckon that it would be useful to some people, must I speak even without being asked to? And if it is about somebody having a greater rank, or about a cleric, must I tall to Abba, or must I keep my silence? And if I am asked, what will I tell? And, it is beneficial I too to speak, how should I speak, in order I to have the countenance of one who speaks humbly, and not as one teaching with authority?

Answer: The Fathers said that "it is good to speak for God and it is good to keep your silence for God" (Paterikon, Pimen 147). And this word of the Fathers means: He who speaks, as I said, without passion, he does good for he speaks for God; and he who think that he is going to speak with passion and he keeps his silence, he does good, for he remained silence for God. If you must speak for God, do not worry about what you are going to speak, because otherwise you will transgress the commandment (Mt. 10: 19). But you must let the thing in the care of God and He will put in your mouth what you will speak usefully. This is for God know how to girdle with power on us the weak ones, and He will strengthen you too, brother.

286. The question of the same one towards the same one: I wonder if we should cut off our will, at the order of Abba, equally in the good things and in the medium things as also in those which seemingly transgress the commandment of God? And if I am given a commandment that exceeds my power, should I be exempted, in order that not to make me sad and not to cause me disturbance? And then: if somebody needing something from Abba asks me to help him and I accept that, won't that bring me an honor making me to reckon myself as worthy of respect?

Answer: Brother, he who want to be a monk, he should not have by any means his will in anything. This was what the Lord taught us, saying: "I have come into the world not to do My will" (Jn. 6: 38). This is because, he who was to do that but he wants not to do the another, either he shows himself as able to a superior discernment of the things (of more right-reckoning) than he who commands, or he is mocked by devils. So, you must obey in everything even if the commanded thing seems to you as a sin. This is for Abba, the one who commands you, he has taken upon himself your judgment, as one who will be held accountable for you. And if it seems difficult to you that what you are asked to do, tell him that and let that thing on behalf of his right-reckoning[613]. And if they who commanded you are brothers, and you notice that the commanded thing is harmful, or that it is above your power, you go and ask Abba and do whatever he tells you to do. And if you want to discern yourself among things, you will attract troubles upon you. Let everything on behalf of Abba and do according to his reckoning (discernment). This is for he knows what he ought to do and how he must take care of your soul. And rest yourself by believing than anything Abba would tell you it is according to God, and that what is according to the grace won't bring you sadness. "This is for any good tree brings forth good fruits" (Mt. 7: 17). And the ask from another in order you to mediate for

[613] There are people who received from God a responsibility for other people as for themselves. Those are: the abbot of a monastery, the fathers, the confessor, and the priest. But this means that they should prepare themselves in order they to lead on the right path the people entrusted to their leadership. If they give wrong advices, they will suffer for the mistakes of those ones, as it were their own mistakes. And him who has been entrusted by God to a spiritual guide, he must make – at his turn – the will of that one as his own will. Through him the will of his spiritual guide will be fulfilled. But if the spiritual guide willed something wrong, he would pay for that. The father, the confessor, he cannot be disinterested in the life of him who is entrusted him, by invoking the excuse of the freedom had by his spiritual son. The man needs also to be taught in order him to know what he should do with his freedom. And some people are more advanced than others in knowing what they should do with their freedom. The responsibility of ones for others it intertwines our destinies insomuch than we rejoice or we suffer together for the consequences of a certain living, one that is not accomplished through only one. We are not saved alone, in am ambitious and egotistic mode; and we do not destroy ourselves alone. But we are saved through them whom we have been having a responsibility for, and together with them whom we have been obeying to; and we will be lost together with them whom we haven't been exercised our responsibility for. No man bears or should bear his burden alone, but he must also bear the burden of others too. But let's not advice out of our pride, so that we will offend them even more, but let's serve them humbly. And our advice must be united with the example of our life in order us not to lose either them whom we advise or ourselves.

them to Abba, if needed, you would fulfill that, in order you to fulfill a commandment heard by you. This is for, if Abba placed you at the gate telling you: announce me about every coming man, will you decide by yourself what to do, instead of fulfilling the commandment of him who has commanded you? If Abba command you to tell him and you not to tell him, that thing will no longer depend on you.

287. The question of the same one towards the same one: If a brother asks me about some word or about a certain thing, and I do not know the answer, should I answer him or not? And if I am not asked but I see a thing done wrongly, will I draw the attention of the one doing that thing, or not?

All these questions need a sole answer: guard yourself against speaking out of vain-glory, but you must speak humbly and in the fear of God. And regarding all the thing you have asked me about, you must speak as much as needed and draw the attention. But do that within your community and not somewhere else, in order you not to be like a teacher. This if for them form monastery are like a sole body[614]. And if you are elsewhere, you will say nothing starting from you. But, if you are asked, you will speak humbly. May God make you sapient, brother.

288. Of the same one towards the same one: You told me that if I was asked about something, of if I saw (that something was being done wrong), I should speak humbly. But what does it mean: humbly? And if I am seeing my heart being sweetened by the vain-glory while I am speaking, even if I am not getting sweetened right then but I foresee that that thing will happen to me later, will I keep my silence or not?

Answer: Telling something humbly, it means saying that not as one who teaches, btu as one who has heard what he says from Abba or from the Fathers. And if it is beneficial to tell that

[614] As in a body, that what happens to a limb makes the whole body and all the other limbs suffer as a whole, likewise, in a monastery, all the inhabitants are responsible for each one them.

thing to the brother, but you are being warred by your vain-glory by getting you sweetened by it, take heed at the fact that should not impede you to be beneficial to the brother. You must rebuke you vain-glory and you must despise it. And after you has spoken, you will repent yourself in front of God and tell Him: "Forgive me, because I have spoken out of my vain-glory". And you will do the same if you feel that later on[615].

289. Of the same one towards the same one: Father, why did you command me to speak even before I am asked to, when I see a thing (that is wrong), while the Fathers tell us not to speak without being asked to (Paterikon, Euripus 9; Pimen 45), and Abba Nisterus amazed everybody because, while living into monastery, he was saying: "I and the donkey are one" (Paterikon, Nisterus 2). And tell me, Father, what does it mean taking heed at thoughts? And if I should do that at an appointed time and how?

The answer of John: Brother, the Fathers speak according to the measure of the people. So, there is a time when the man can serve and then he must show deeds of serving. And there will be a time when the same one will be served, and when his measures will be different. The consummate things were told to the consummate ones, and the other things were told to them who still are under the law, because these ones still are guided by the pedagogue (Gal. 3: 23-24). When you will have died to the world, as Abba Nisterus did, you will be able to say: "I am a donkey". Do not get haughty in your thought, because that will

[615] One must continuously pluck of that weed that sprouts out next to the wheat ear, in order the weed not to chock up the wheat. He who reached the good that is clean in itself, he has completely surpassed on himself, and he remains conscious of the fact that other too will surpass on themselves when they have truly accomplished on themselves, so that they too will no longer have within themselves except the good. That one lives the encounter with the transcendent God, God Who is beyond this world and beyond our existence which the good and the evil are mixed within, and which the moments of freedom alternate in with moments of enslavement. This is not the way of arguing the existence of God by using the argument of the existence of the good, in other word a speculative way, but this is the way of encountering God. In this way the one who is completely humble he lives his connection with God, as one who has totally surpassed on himself in that connection with Him Whom he depends on in an absolute manner. By living on himself as one who do not owe his existence to himself, in anything, but still existing, he will live the fact itself of his existence as being totally due to God.

harm you. The Fathers appointed moments for taking heed at thoughts. We must say to yourselves in the morning: "analyze how you have spent your night"; and in the evening: "analyze how you have spent your day" (Nisterus 5). But you must take heed also at the time from between those, when your thought gets burdened[616].

The Scholium from Volos Edition: By that, the bearer of God Father shows that not haphazardly said somebody: "I am a donkey", but he did that in order to humble himself and to diminish himself. And that that is not a dishonorable thing to say: "I am a donkey", but that is the greatest honor. That's why the Father says: "Do not get haughty in your thought". This is for, when somebody reaches the measures of the donkey by allowing himself to be hit and reproached and burdened and driven, and tied, and enduring everything, as the donkey used to endure, and not only without resisting and without remembering the evil and without doing any contrary movement in heart like that one does, but as one who doesn't feel those, and that means the required twofold killing, or even the threefold killing, then he ca dare to say to himself: "I am a donkey". And he must do this with much humbleness, by knowing the height of that stage. But I reckon that one shouldn't do that even then. But, rather, by seeing himself even then as lower than this state, he will reckon as a daring to say: "I am a donkey", or even to think at that, because of knowing that this means getting haughty with the thought that is one with the soul's falling and that truly is a total destruction.

290. Of the same one towards the same one: If somebody among the Fathers who are superior to me, he asked me about something, should I answer him what I reckon as useful?

The answer of John: You have nothing to say to him. This is because you do not know the will of God, in order you to know what is beneficial. So, if somebody among them asked you

[616] The thought means here conscience; ask your conscience in the morning: how have you spent your night; and in the evening, ask your conscience about how you have spent your day. But the conscience often gets burdened, so that will not longer pay attention to itself.

something, you would tell him, humbly: “forgive me, for I do not know”.

291. Of the same one towards the same one: If a brother did a neutral thing (neither good or bad), and because of my will I got upset with him, what should I do? Should I keep my silence and not to appease my heart, or should I tell him with love and so I wouldn’t remain disturbed? And if that thing troubled others and not me, should I tell him for others? Wouldn’t be thig a deed of vain-glory?

The answer of John: If a brother did something neither good nor bad, and you would still tell him in order you to appease your heart, you would do a mistake. This is because you cannot suffer him because of your weakness. That’s why you should rebuke on yourself and keep your silence. And if that thing upsets others, you would tell that to your Abba. And Abba either would tell that brother or he will tell you what you have to do, and so you will get rid of worry.

292. The question of the same one: If I told that to Abba for others, but I supposed that that upset the brother, what should I do? And if that thing upset both others and me, should I tell that to Abba on my behalf, or should I keep my silence in order not to provide me pleasure? And if I supposed that the brother wasn’t upset, should I tell that for myself or should I force myself to remain silent?

The answer of John: Do not worry about troubling the brother by you talking to Abba. But if you needed to tell to Abba for others and you were worried about that, you should tell that on behalf of them. But if it was about telling to Abba only on your behalf, you should force yourself not to tell him anything.

293. The question of the same one: But my thought tells me that if the brother got troubled against me, he would become my enemy, because of reckoning that I talked to Abba against him.

The answer of John: This is a cunning thought wanting to impede you from correcting that brother[617]. So, do not stop yourself from telling that to Abba. But do that, of course, according to God. Of course, that the ill patients shout out against their physicians when the physicians take care of them. But the physicians do not care about that, for they know that later on the patients will thank them.

294. The question of the same one: When my thought tells me that I didn't want to say that for the benefit of my brother but in order to slander him, should I tell of should I keep my silence?

The answer of John: Urge your thought to speak according to God, and not with passion. But if you were defeated by your desire for slander, you would tell to Abba in that case too, but you should also confess Abba your thought of slander, so that both of you to be healed: that brother of his mistake and you of your slandering.

295. The question of the same one: If my thought didn't allow me to confess to Abba that the purpose of my speaking is that of gossiping my brother, what should I do? Should I talk to Abba, or not?

Answer: Do not tell him anything, and the Lord will take care of everything. This is because you won't need to tell something to Abba if the price is the harming of your soul. And God will take care, as He knows, of the healing of that brother.

296. The question of the same one towards the same one: It happens to me to do something, as I reckon, with judgment. But then somebody corrects that. And everything I invoke in my defense I tell out of my vain-glory. What should I do?

[617] It is about a brother who committed a neutral thing. That brother couldn't get upset if somebody told Abba about that. This is because Abba wouldn't condemn a neutral thing.

Answer: If there was no need for defense, you would keep your silence. But if it was useful for the brother, you should heal him, but you also should resist your vain-glory[618].

297. The question of the same one towards the same one: When I do something neither good or bad, and if we know that if a brother sees me doing that, he will be offended by me, I am tempted by my vain-glory to hide that. This is for I will feel shame if he saw that. So, should I not hide that in order I not to fall into vain-gloriousness, or should I hide that in order not to offend my brother? I do not know surely that he will be offended, but I suppose that. What should I do?

The answer of John: If your heart knows that your brother gets offended, you will protect him and you won't give him such a thought. But if you do not know that surely, but if you only supposed that to be so, you won't worry yourself about that.

298. The ask of the same one towards the same one: If I told somebody a word that pricked him, but he didn't understand that word, should I ask him for forgiveness or should I keep my silence and not give him reason to get troubled?

The answer of John: If the brother doesn't not understand that you have pricked him, you will keep your silence and you won't disturb him. But you will force on yourself to repent for that in front of God.

299. The question of the same one towards the same one: If somebody saw his brother committing mistakes and he told to Abba, what should feel him against whom that thing was said, for him who told that thing against him?

[618] It could be that a brother got offended by hearing that you did a thing which he didn't expect from you. In that was the case, you should show him that you didn't do that, in order him not to get offended; but you should avoid doing that out of your vain-glory, in order you not offend him by exemplifying him your passion. And neither you should fall into that. We shun ourselves form passion not only for ourselves, but also for others. The passions are contagious diseases. We must shun them also due to our responsibility for others.

The answer of John: If he is a believer and if he lives according to God, even if him who spoke against him did that because of enmity, he should thing: "That brother told that wanting I to benefit of that". And it will be fulfilled with him the saying: "The good man out of his treasury brings out the good thing" (Lk. 6: 45). And by thinking so, he will benefit more by living that one than by hating him. And by behaving such, he will progress into God.

302. The question of the same one towards the same one: Because I felt, due to my vain-glory, that when I bowed down in front of somebody I blushed a little, should I seek to bow down in front of some people intentionally, or should I do that only when the need for that occurs?[619]

The answer of John: You should not intentionally seek for bowing done in front of some people, but you do it only when needed.

303. Should I bow down even in front of ones who are inferior to me? Or should I comfort them with a word, in order not to occur within men, out of the contrary deed, the vain-gloriousness?

The answer of John: As there are great and honorable people who are in debt with the unimportant and all-inferior people, but they still owe to pay their debt once they are debtors, you will do similarly when you owe to bow down in front of a brother who is inferior to you, and you will let aside the vain-glory once you owe to do that to your brother.

304. The question of the same one towards the same one: If a passionate thought entered my heart, which would be the means for rejecting that thought"? Should I do that resisting it by words, or by rebuking, or by getting angry against that thought?

[619] Namely, should I intentionally seek for occasions to defeat my vain-glory, by bowing down in front of people even unnecessarily, or should I do that only when needed?

Or should I run to God and throw my helplessness in front of God?

The answer of John: Brother, the passions are troubles and the lord didn't protect us against them, but He told us: "on the day of your trouble, you call Me and I will deliver you and you will extoll Me" (Ps. 90: 15[620]). So, in any passions, there's nothing more useful than calling upon the name of God. Regarding the resistance by word, that is possible only to some people, especially to the powerful ones, whom the devils obey to. This is because, if one of the helpless ones wanted to resist them, the devils would laugh at him as at one who wanted to resist them while he still were under their mastery[621]. Rebuking them is possible only to the great ones, who have power. Whom among the saints you see rebuking a devil, as Saint Michael did, for he had power? (Jude 9-10). To us, for we are the weak ones, it is not given except us to run to the name of Jesus. This is because, according to the Scripture, and the passions are devils, and the devils are cast out in the name of Jesus (Acts 8: 7; 16: 18). And what do you want more than that? May God strengthen you and give you power into His fear[622].

305. The ask of the same one towards the same one: I ask you, Father, to give me your word that you are praying for me, as the Holy Oldman too gave it to me. This is because, immediately after I have been defeated in something my thought will tell me: "Because you have pride, God wont' help you to master your

[620] In KJB we have: Ps. 91: 15: "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him."; in ROB we have: Ps. 90: 15: "he will shout out towards Me and I will hear him; I am with him into trouble and I will get him out and I will glorify him." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[621] Only after the passion have been weakened by much prayer, the man will be able to stop himself the passion's movement.

[622] The fear of God provides power. The fear of God doesn't weaken. The bigger fear one has of God, the more present God will be in him with His power coming out of Him. That's why one who is fill of fear of God he will be full of God's power as well, for in this fear is the living of the overwhelming presence of God. Th fear of God provides you with the power of not fearing anything else. The fear of God helps you against your passions, it mobilizes and strengthens in that fear all the resources you have for fight. God is lives as the One Who cannot be defined: mysterium tremendum. Existentially and apophatically. That fear is the fear opening to you the horizon from beyond the world, that it attracts you in the same time, and that makes you repent for your sins and to pursuit the good, by feeling God as the upholder of the good.

passions, in order you not to fall into vain-glory by mastering them; or this happens to you because by easily receiving the help, you will lose it easily too, or in order you, for wanting to receive the help, to often run to God; or because of some other reason". Or can that happen to me rather because of my drowsiness? What should I do?

The answer of John: If all of us are one, as I dare to say, namely also the Oldman into God and I together with him, if he gave you his word, I too would give you my word through him. I know that I am weak and all-unimportant. But I cannot part myself with the Oldman. This is for he has mercy on me so that we both to be one[623]. But take heed at yourself, brother. Strive yourself to toil for keeping the commandments. And if you were defeated, you wouldn't get drowsy, neither would you despair, but you would stand up again and God will help you. This is because you could suffer that because of the first things mentioned by you. But that can happen to you also because of your drowsiness. But you can get liberate from both of them, by throwing on yourself, crying, in front of god's kindness, so that Him to liberate you from those and from other passions of yours, by the prayers of the saints[624]. Amen.

306. Of the same one towards the same one: Ask for help for fulfilling the things commanded by the Great Oldman.

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[623] It is here about the "reciprocal interiority" which the love produced between two persons. I am within another and he is within me, but without us to be confounded to one another. By working in a certain manner, I show my subject, and another does that too. But we cannot truly be one within another except by being into a subject who is our common support. Such are the children in their mother. But in a culminant manner we are one within another for we are both of us within a subject that is much superior in His comprising power and love which unite both of us. His love unites both of us, either we feel that in a more or less accentuated manner.

[624] The prayers of ones for others spring out of the unity among those who are united into God, as we have said in the previous footnote. If I feel the another within me, it will be impossible I not to feel also his tribulations and his troubled which he suffers of, and that not to push me to pray God for him, but, once we feel comprised within God's love. But this reciprocal interiority we live it also with those who passed away from this life. So, we cannot by pray also for those whom we know about that they left burdened by weaknesses, and we cannot but also think that they too who left with great power and spiritual love for us they are praying for us, especially because they feel in a more accentuated manner the full of love presence of God. Then, they couldn't truly be united with those who truly believe into Church, if they weren't praying ones for others.

The answer of John: Brother, the Great Oldman hasn't left anything unanswered in his "Answers" towards you. This is for, after he told you: "Guard my words and the testament I have given to you will be guarded", what else do you want? Do everything you can for his testament to be guarded on your behalf. This is for, of this consists the inheritance of the Kingdom with the Paradise of its delectation: "The things which the eye hasn't seen and the ear hasn't heard and to the man's heart they haven't ascended, which God has prepared for them who love Him" (1 Cor. 2: 9). But you must add to that, thought, your power and you striving. And the mercy and the bestowing of the power belong to God. Him it is due the glory forever. Amen.

307. The question of the same one: What should I do, for I fear to be ashamed and despised. This is because, when I fall into some discussion with some people, I am so attracted and enslaved by that discussion than I am amazed by myself. And when I remember about myself, I feel shame and I leave them whom I am speaking to.

The answer of John: In order the weak one not to fall in these things and in the love for glory, he must immediately run away from much-speaking and to cut off the discussion, by invoking as motif the fact that Abba has given him something urgent to do and he is hurrying up. And the fact that you cannot stand to be despised it comes out of your faithlessness. Brother, Jesus made Himself man and He was despised. Are you superior to Jesus? This means faithlessness and deceit from devils. He who wants the humbleness, he vainly says: "I want it"; if he doesn't endure dishonors, he won't achieve it. Do not disregard that what you have heard, because otherwise you will be despised through your deed itself[625].

308. The question of the same one: When some people come to monastery, either laymen or fathers, my thought tells me

[625] That monk that despises the advice not to tarry to discussions, in order not to be despised by others, he will attract contempt upon himself right by tarrying into discussions.

that I should ask them for something useful to my soul, or for some other thing. What do you reckon?

The answer of John: Brother, he who truly is the disciple of Christ, he doesn't have even the smallest freedom to do something by himself[626]. Even if it seems to him that he benefits out of the discussions with the visitors, he will deviate from the commandment that tell us: "Do all things with advice" (Prov. 24: 32). What do you want to hear more than the Fathers said: "If there are present some people who speak the word of God, you will ask you Abba, humbly: Abba, do you want me to stay and listen, oy should I live?" (Abbe Isaïe, Recueil, 3: 33, p. 51-52). And that what he tells you, that you will do quietly. And if because of some need you want to ask somebody for that, either a monk or a layman, tell that before to Abba. And if he tells you: "go ahead and ask", you will ask[627].

309. But if I do not want to ask myself, but it happen to meet some of them, or somebody asks me about something, what do you command me to do?

The answer of Barsanuphius: When you meet somebody, let you word to stop after the salute. And more than that, you can say: "Pray for me, for I am going to fulfill a task". And then you leave. And if that one asks you about something and you know about that, you will answer him and then you will continue walking, and if you do not know about that what he asked you, you will tell him: "I do not know" and you will keep walking.

310. Question: If I am sitting or also working, and somebody sits next to me and invited me to have a dialogue, what should I do?

The answer of John: If somebody finds you sitting and he draws near to you, you will accept his blessing and you will

[626] This is not freedom, but it is slavery to the vain-glory. That man who truly is free of passions, he lives, free, into Christ.
[627] So will the man be liberated from his will, better said from the slavery to the vain-glory.

bless him too. And tell him: "Pray for me". And if he holds you near with his hands, you will tell him: "Forgive me, because I have commandment not to speak to somebody without Abba's permission. I am going to ask him and that what he tells me I am going to do". And if somebody sits down next to you while you are working, you will invoke the fact of having a task to fulfill and get up and leave.

311. The question of the same one: And what does it mean that what Abba Isaiah says: "After you have saluted the stranger, ask him: "How are you" and then keep your silence, while sitting next to him (Recueil 3: 46, p. 53)?

Answer: You have written that Abba Isaiah told us to receive the stranger and after saluting him and asking him: "How are you?", we should sit next to him in silence. But this was told to an old man who was spiritually advanced. The serious disciple who wants to become a monk he will guard himself against such meetings. This is for out of such meetings will be born the contempt, the drowsiness, the disobedience, and an awful daring. That's why they somewhere about John that he didn't lose time with such meetings (Paterikon, John Colovos 30).

312. The question of the same one: My thought tells me: Cut off the discussions suddenly, and you will be saved. And my thought also tells me: Cut off the discussions gradually, in order those who know you not to wonder about that. Tell me which one of these two sorts of behavior would be the best?

The answer of John: regarding the sudden or the gradual cutting off of your discussions in order them who know you not to wonder about you, cut those discussions off suddenly and you will get rid of worry. Otherwise, you will give them reasons and thoughts. Reasons for they to say: "For he has spoken to me first, I am going to speak him too". Thoughts: "Does this brother have something against me, because previously he was talking to me, but not he no longer talks to me?". But you must want this thing and God will help you to succeed.

313. But sometimes it happens that ill people come to monastery asking me for something from infirmary and Abba commanded me to give them what they ask for. And this forces me to talk to them. I wonder, do I do this in order to fulfill my will? Tell me, Father, and pray for me so that I could find peace in this regard.

The answer of John: Regarding the ill people coming and asking for something from infirmary, if you give to all of them equally, you won't have to worry. This is for that you have been commanded to do. But you must pay much attention, lets to use that as motif to tarry to discussions with somebody, or you to talk more than needed, and ask him only if you need to know a necessary thing. But even in these ones, you must restrict yourself only to what is needed, by taking heed at the fact that the evil will not to find any reason to prolong the discussion. Guard these ones and you will find resting.

314. Question: My thought tells me that the quietude is more necessary than anything and that it is beneficial to me. Does my thought tell me right?

The answer of John: What the quietude is? The quietude consists of somebody gathering his heart in itself, and stopping his heart from giving and form taking and form the desire for being pleasant to people and form the other things. When our Lord shamed the scribe by telling him the parable of the man fell among thieves, and our Lord asked him: "Who was his neighbor?", the scribe answered: "Him who had mercy on him" (Lk. 10: 37). But also, our Lord said: Mercy I want, and not sacrifice" (Mt. 9: 13). So, if you know that the mercy id greater than the sacrifice, lean your heart towards mercy. This is because under the masque of the quietude one can reach to pride, until the man hasn't' gained on himself, namely until he hasn't reached to be without blemish[628]. This is because only

[628] Here is being done the difference between that quietude that becomes indifferent, through withdrawal from others, and that quietude that is full of mercy on others, going even to cross for them, and this quietude doesn't need withdrawal. A quietude that is indifferent to the

then the quietude is born within man: when the man borne the cross. So, when you suffer together with another, you will find help. But whether you reckon on yourself as one who has surpassed the measure, you should find from me that even that what you have had, you actually have lost. So, you must not walk either inside or outside, but you must start form the middle, by understanding what the will of God is, "because the days are bad" (Gal. 5: 16)[629].

315. Question of the same one: Master, how should I understand: neither inside, nor outside, but in the thing from the middle? Explain me: should one appoint different days for quietude and for taking care of thing?

The answer of John: Not trusting either the quietude or showing contempt for occupations, but begin both humble and proud in quietude and awake in occupations, this is the middle path that never falls[630]. And in the work of gathering the

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others' pain, it is a locking up into pride. But he who hasn't reached that state which is no longer tempted by sins in, he won't be able to be, in the same time, full of mercy for others and peaceful. Uniting the quietude with the mercy on others it is characteristic to them who have reached a state of righteousness. Such a man has discovered his clean heart, or his inside. But within heart he finds his mercy on others. Or, the "more heart" he has, the more he will be united with others in pain. The heart is unseparated from others. The people meet one another through the mediation of the heart. The heart is in the middle, between a man and another. The inside is united, in an unmediated manner, with them who are outside. Or, the people form outside has become an inward part of his. Barsanuphius and John do not recommend an individualistic withdrawal, but they recommend a preoccupation with others. And not in your own interest, but in the interest of others. The withdrawal from the relationships with others it is recommended only to him how is not spiritually advances, so that such relationships tempt him.

[629] The man must struggle for gaining on himself, for knowing on himself, and for continuously having his true self. But you will gain on yourself if you sacrifice yourself for another.

[630] Another unmediated union between the realities from outside and the realities from inside, or the middle between those, it is the paradoxical union as inwards state and the mercy on the people from outside, or between looking at them who are outside and the paying of attention to oneself. This union humanizes the orientation towards interior and it gives cleanness to the orientation towards the realities from outside, and it humanizes that one too. The mercy isn't either a locking up within yourself or scattering outside, but the mercy united both of those. You humanize the interior by being compassionate on others. Barsanuphius and John do not search for a salvation through isolation from others, but he reckoned as superior to everything else the care for the salvation of others. In order one to reach this equilibrium, he needs humbleness and quietude and watchfulness in occupations.

thought, there is not a border which to discerns among hours; all the lest among days[631]. But the man must endure with thankfulness the things coming upon him. And he must suffer together with all the people living in his community. By that it will be fulfilled the Apostle's commandment (2 Cor. 12: 26), namely, when a limb suffers, let all the other limbs suffer with that limb, in order they to strengthen and to comfort that limb. This is the compassion. And suffering together with the ill ones and helping them to get healed it is a good thing to do. This is for, if the doctor taking care of the ill one, he will have his payment, all the more him who suffers in everything together with his neighbor, according to his power, he will have his reward too. This is because, if one doesn't suffer in all things with another, even in the few things he suffers together with that one he will show that he actually will be fulfilling his own will[632].

316. Question of the same one: You have commanded me to persevere in the middle. But it happens to me that when I am not occupied and I have the occasion to sit down a little within my monastic cell, there come friends, monks and laymen, who usually visit me, and they disturb me. And if I tell them that, I will get disturbed; but if I do not tell them that, I must remain with them and so the businesses of the infirmary will remain unfulfilled. Don't you order me that, when the brothers are present, I to tell to someone else to go and take care of infirmary's businesses? Or should I go? I think these like a man. But if in this thought there is some will of justifying myself, may the will of God be done and not mine. This is for my will won't last forever, but it will come to an end, by perishing.

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[631] Because at any moment one must united the taking heed at himself with the mercy on others, there cannot be days totally dedicated only to paying attention to oneself, and then days totally dedicated only to exterior occupations.

[632] He who hasn't yet rejected his egotism in all things, his egotism wills till be present in some of the thing, to a certain extent; even in those things which he seemingly has rejected his egotism in. Who knows what interest he has in suffering only for certain things? He might think at the fact that he too will suffer of that that that (😅) one suffers of too. In his merciful suffering for another there is a palpitant self-surpassing. Ona passes against his own border, the border which we are locked up within, and so ne reaches into the transcendent God Who is not locked up within Himself, but He is full of an endless love for His creatures. Such a man will no longer be held back by any egotism, or by any limit.

The answer of John: When the man descends into humbleness, he progresses. Remaining inside your monastic cell will make you unworking, because you are shunned from troubles. And by finding you worriless before time, the enemy prepares to you more disturbance than resting, in order him to bring you to the state that you to say: "It would have been better to me if I hadn't been born". As about being disturbed by people, the Fathers said: "Is there any man moaning for death and who still takes heed at the friendships of this world" (Paterikon, Pimen 123)? So, you too shouldn't give them anything and receive nothing from them, and they will leave. And regarding the fact of being you served by a brother, if you do what you need by yourself, you will help on yourself. But if you do that through another, that what exceeds your toil and your prayer will be taken by that one[633]. I told your before about the together-suffering with another. You must strive for that, if you believe the Apostle who says: "Who is sick and I won't be sick too? Who is offended and I won't burn too?" (2 Cor. 11: 29). "Endure evil with them who endure evil, as ones who are bodies too" (Hebr. 13: 3).

317. How could I, Father, to give gladly give somebody a thing that he asks for, if I doubted that that one asks for that thing because he needed it? This is because, by giving that thing forcedly, my soul will remain harsh and cold?

The answer of John: If you find out that he who asks for something he asks for that because he needs that, you will give that to him joyfully, as by giving him out of the things belonging to God. This is the gladness. But if you find out that he doesn't actually need that, you won't give that to him, but you will tell him: "I have commandment from Abba not to give him who doesn't actually need what he asks for". And this is not harshness. May the Lord make you sapient, brother.

318. Question: I have red in "The Ascetic Rules" written by Saint Basil and I have found out that anybody who has

[633] How much it has been added to you through another's toil, and not through your own toil, that will be given to another.

something and he gives that something to somebody else, he rather will give that to himself than to another, according to the Lord's commandments (Acts 20: 35). How can one keep this?

Answer: This thing has been written for him who lives alone and he can organize himself with right-reckoning. But he who lives in monastery and who obeys a Father, he hasn't been given such a commandment[634], neither has he the freedom to fulfill his will.

319. Question: I have found out also this thing in "The Ascetic Rules" of Saint Basil: that he who is addicted to something from among the present things, or if he attaches himself to something among the things attracting him, or if he deviates even the least form God's commandment, he won't be able to reach to be disciple of the Lord (Régules morale 2: 3; pg. 31: 705 B). But my relatives owe me a small part of wealth and I 3woudl want to give that to the poor, but my relatives do not quite want to give me that. Whas should I do?[635]

If you do not cut off your bodily thought and if you do not achieve a little indifference according to God, you will fell into the desire for being pleasant to people. May God give you power for you to make His will in everything. Amen.

320. The question of the same one: What does it mean that non-being-silent which the Fathers speak about? And how could I fulfill that?

Answer: As I reckon, we must not keep our silence about our thoughts. This is because if one doesn't confess openly his thoughts, he will remain unhealed[636]. But we must ask the

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[634] One cannot fulfill only a commandment, independently.

[635] Dorotheos felt himself attached to that small wealth owed to him by his relatives. But he wanted to share that to the poor. He asked: would that be a sin if he felt himself attached to that wealth?

[636] There is necessary a communication of thoughts for the man's souly health. The man is not healthy when he locks up within himself. This shows the interpersonal character of the man. But I need to confess my thoughts not in order to search for supporting them but in order I to reject them. Namely, one must reject his thoughts which uphold his egotism, and he won't be

spiritual Fathers about the non-silence on those thoughts of ours. I have told you, brother, that what I am thinking. But if you understand those things better, may the Lord give us that wisdom from Him, both to you, and to me the all-unimportant servant of yours.

321. Question: What does it mean, Father, that what you have told me: that on him who takes vigil the sleep won't harm him?

The answer of John: From him who guards his herd as Jacob did, the sleep will stay away. And when the sleep kidnaps him for a lithe while, his sleep is like the vigil of another. This is for the fire burning his heart won't allow him to sink into sleep. He sings psalms together wit David: "Enlighten my eyes so that I won't sleep towards death" (Ps. 12: 4[637]). He who has reached this measure and he tastes its sweetness[638], he will understand the said things. This is for such a man won't get drunk with the bodily sleep, but he only needs the sleep of the nature[639].

322. The question of the same one: If somebody asks me to enter his monastic cell to make a prayer together, or if I ask him

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able to do that except by communicating those egotistic thoughts of his, to somebody else. You must disapprove your own egotistic thoughts in front of another. He whom you confess your thoughts to, he must become a companion of yours into communion. I won't be able to offload my egotism if I do not enter the communion with another. Only another conscience can offload me, if I show that I leave my egotism.

[637] In KJB we have: Ps. 13: 3: "Consider and hear me, O Lord my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death;"; in ROB we have: Ps. 12: 4: "Look at me, hear me, Lord, my God, enlighten my eyes, lest I will fall asleep into death," (E. l. t.'s n.)

[638] Regardless what spiritual height the man reaches, the still remain a man and his measure move on the line of the mankind. The man doesn't exit beyond any measure, as God is, neither will the man cross into the string of the angelic measures. And the higher the reached measure is, the more the man will be sweetened by a richer and more pleasant knowledge and communion.

[639] The bodily sleep has its sweetness too. This is for there is also a sleep of the integral nature of the man, which the soul will be rested too, and not only the body. Then he is kidnapped on the godlike plan, and he rests on that plan, a plan that is superior to the souly plan, a plan that remains active while the body sleeps. Only this sleep gets the man drunk, by being shown to him during that sleep "the things which the eye hasn't seen" etc. (1 Cor. 2: 9). Then will cease also the soul's movements of perceiving, of feeling, of imagining, but the soul's perceiving power still remains active.

to enter my monastic cell, or if I want to help somebody to do something, how far should I go in rejecting his ask, or in insisting in my ask? Without any doubt, it is about the case when no commandment would be transgressed.

Answer: If you enter the monastic cell of some brother, or if he enters your monastic cell and tall you "Pray", you will answer him up to three time: "Forgive me". And if he still insists after the third time, you will pray with humbleness. And you must do the same: as him for three times. And if he doesn't want that, you will leave him alone. This is because strife is not good. And for anything, either if it is about to suffer something from somebody, or if you stretch your hand out to him, ask up to the third time. And if that one doesn't accept to do what you ask him, you will peacefully leave him alone and you won't bother him. This is the true path of God, which you must take heed at working yourself unhypocritically, with a clean heart5. This is for, in such a case God give you His hand and He will help you by His grace. Amen.

323. The question of the same one: If one has prepared a feast and they give me my share but I don't need to take that, do you command me to accept that in order I not to seem like refusing that because of my restraining and so I could share it to them who need that in infirmary? Or should I not take it?

The answer of John: If you need something form that feast, take it, brother, and if not, leave it there. This is because, otherwise, there will be born within you the vain-glory.

324. The question of the same one: It happened sometimes that after I prepared an agape for the brothers, I felt some vain-gloriousness; should I better secretly prepare the agape through Abba rather than through myself? This is for in this way I will fight the vain-gloriousness. And could somebody get rid of this vain-gloriousness? This is for the vain-gloriousness is sown within man through both on the left and of the right things.

Answer: You must take heed at both sorts. Because both of them can be occasion for vain-gloriousness[640]. But such an occasion will be smaller when preparing the agape through Abba, because the heart will have occasion for vain-glory only within itself. But if doing it by yourself, you will have a twofold war, namely not only from your heart but also from people. But getting freed from the love for vain-glory can be reached only by them who have totally existed the former man. May the Lord bestow you this freedom into Christ Jesus[641]. Whom it is due the glory forever. Amen.

325. Question: When I close my eyes during the religious services, I can gather my thoughts together. Is that good? Doesn't that seem to the brothers from around me as something inappropriate, so that they could get offended?

The answer of John: If each time when you close your eyes during the religious services your thoughts are gathered to God, you should not take heed at others, even though you could seem to the brothers around you as doing something inappropriate.

326. The question of the same one: I have my own books and my thought tells me to donate them to the monastery so that I could get rid of caring for them, since the common books are given to each one to read them. I think alike about the clothes too. Tell me, Father, should I do that? And what clothes should I keep for the weakness of my body?

The answer of John: If you want to get rid of those, it will be good you to do as you said and donate them to the monastery. This is for everything that belongs to the monastery it belongs to God. Regarding the clothes, keep for winter two

[640] He can feel satisfactions also when preparing the agape secretly, through Abba, by seeing that he has defeated on himself by preparing that feast secretly.

[641] Only the feeling of the presence of Him Who is free of any chain of any passions, of Him Who is all-free, only that can bestow us too, the power and the happiness of that freedom. Then we will have been elevated form the fabric of the relative things up into the spiritual ambience of Him Who is above any relativeness, above any dependence; of this state of His consists te3h true glory that doesn't' dominate him who has it.

thick sleeveless coats and a blouse, and for summer two thin coats and a blouse. And for winter keep also a waistcoat for your chest, for the time when it is very cold. And for the time when it is not cold, keep the monastic robe and two long clothes with sleeves, one for winter and another for summer. And also, two covers: one thick and one thin. Keep a mattress and a pillow. This is for you need those. And if you receive a coat and you need it, you will keep that too, and the old one you will give it to Abba. And if you do not need that one given to you, you will give that too to Abba. May the Lord give you power to obey and to fulfill these things. This is that progress and that straightening according to God.

327. The question of the same one towards the Great Oldman: Because you have appointed me in the service of this infirmary, please show me, Father, if I should read some medicine books and to use such books, or should I not to take care of such thing because they will scatter my mind, So that I should shun from those, lest there will be born within my the vain-gloriousness? Should I use only the things I know by being sufficient to me to use the oil, the cauterizations, the unguents, and simply all the things used by them who do not read books?[642] *So, what should I do? This is for my heart trembles in this job, lest I will make mistakes and I will add sins too to my passions.*

The answer of the Great Oldman: Because we haven't yet reached the consummation so that us to be delivered from the slavery of the passions, it is rather a help to us using the medicine writings than to let ourselves in the care of the passions[643]. But we must not hope in them, but we must trust God Who gives the death and the life[644], according to the

[642] At that time the medical science was not so advanced in comparison to the empirical treatments inherited from a long tradition.

[643] This is because, if we trusted our skillfulness, we would to that with pride and so we would be wrong.

[644] God brings death too, in the meaning that He withdraws His power that upholds the people's life, after God allowed them for awhile to grow up spiritually, consequently to the ancestral sin. But God withdraws it concretely, from each one, when He reckons as good. For to them who have used well the time allotted to them God will give them a superior life after their death, and because to those who haven't used the time of their lives well, and they won't use it even in the future, God reckons that there is no longer a point in letting the

saying: "I Beat and I heal" (The Second Law 32: 39). So, by reading these books or by asking some people about them, do not forgive that nobody is healed without God. So, he who uses such books he must use them in the name of God and God will help him. The medicinal craftsmanship doesn't impede somebody from piousness, but you must reckon the medicinal care as the brothers' hand labor. Do that what you do in the fear of God and you will be guarded with the prayers of the saints. Amen.

328. The question of the same one towards the same one: You told me on other occasion that one cuts off his will also by not insisting to impose his will. And it happens, Father, that I impose something useful to a patient, but that harms him and I am troubled because I imposed my will in that. And I also seem myself as scattered for the whole day, so that I almost fail in remembering God. Then I am upset by the covetousness of my belly. Tell me, therefore, what should I do, for I believe that out of what you will tell me it will come my salvation.

The answer of Barsanuphius: If you imposed your opinion by reckoning that that thing would help the patients, and out of this occurred a harm, God would take heed at your heart and He wouldn't condemn you. This is for God know that you have harmed that patient while wanting to help him. But if an experienced man talks to you and you disregard him, that means that you will impose your own will out of pride.

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communication of the life from Himself. So, they have been preparing their own death by breaking their connection from God.

But the death often has a positive meaning. By and large, by receiving his existence, the man receives also a responsibility for strengthening his being for the eternal life. This responsibility has many occasions and ways of manifestation. To this responsibility belongs also the development of the man's existence in dignity, in honor, and in courage, for the great cause of the good connected to God. Sometimes, this dignity must be paid with the death. So, the man must be ready to receive the death too; one must prepare his eternal life by such a death. Thus, even though the death is intertwined with the sufferance and it is a passive thing, by being received with a supreme dignity after a preparation in this sense, it will contribute at its turn to prolonging the man's existence on the plan of a corresponding eternal existence. This death and such a preparation are preferred by God too, instead of a life in cowardice, in lie, or in debauchery. Thus, one can say in many ways that God gives the death too. God give the death through the separation from the sinner, and God accepts the death of him who received his death with dignity, in order God to cross him to the superior life as a reward for his clean, but perishable, life.

Many people hear constantly about a certain city but then they happen to enter that city they do not know that that's the actual city they have been hearing of. Brother, are you thinking at God for the whole day and you don't know that? This is for knowing about a commandment of God and occupying yourself with fulfilling it, it means obeying God and thinking at Him[645]. And John said you rightly: "You must firstly give the leaves, and, at the command of God, you will also bring forth the fruits". So, if you do not know what is useful, you will follow them who know it; of this consists the humbleness and through it you will find the grace of God.

And that what you have said that "out of this it will come my salvation", you have said that rightly. This is for without God your coming wouldn't have happened, but God guided you. Strengthen yourself into the Lord, for you bring not only a few benefits out of the scattering which you are talking about. And regarding the covetousness of your belly, you must fight it as strong and you can, and the Lord will help you to understand and to fulfill what is useful to you. Encourage yourself and be strong into the Lord (The Second Law 31: 6)[646].

329. The question of the same one towards the same one: For you have told me that obeying and remembering God consist of having a commandment and fulfilling it, I pray you, make me know if it is possible in such a scattering to serve according to God, and if it is possible I to have this ceaseless remembrance while among people. And if possible ask for me, Father, that

[645] Even if you do not mention the name of God, by fulfilling the commandment that you know about that it comes to God, you actually remember God. he who works in the courtyard of a master, even though he doesn't' constantly think at his master, he still will serve his master.

[646] The man cannot be stronger than God is. When the man is by himself, he is weak. In the faithful man one can no longer discern between what belong to the man and what belongs to God. The man feels that everything he does it is actually done by God. But the man employs so much zeal as everything would depend on him. God won't work without man's zeal. But the man's zeal has its warmth from God. The man will be held accountable if he doesn't work as God wants, or the man will be rewarded if he does it. But the man would be unable to work as God wants if he didn't have the strengthening from God. And the man will be condemned because of not working so, for he hasn't received the help from God.

what is beneficial to me. This is for all things are possible to you and to God (Mk. 10: 27; 14: 36)[647].

Regarding the ceaseless remembrance of God, each man can do that according to his measure. But you must only be humble. This is for I know better that you know what is useful to you, and I will ask God for that, on your behalf, this is for all the things are possible to God[648].

330. The question of the same one towards the same one: I am again falling down before you, you merciful Father, and I do not cease bothering you until you will strengthen me. This is because, when God gives me, through your prayers, a little sadness for my mistakes, I gradually lose it because of the scattering form outside. I pray you, Father, strengthen me, and that5 strengthening to be wholly form God and from you and nothing of it from me. This is because I won't be able to do anything if I do not receive power through your prayers. Regarding the administration of the infirmary, I fear, Father, that because I ought to show authority that will lead me to vain-gloriousness and to daring. And because I often handle foods, I will be burdened by the covetousness of my belly. So, if you deign it, I will want to progress through a humbler serving and, if I got a little eased, I would take again the present duties. You know, Father, that I ask for this not because I am disgusted by the present appointment of mine. This is for, how could I do that, the needy of me. But I fear, Father, lest by sitting inside, the mentioned passions to get infuriated either because of me or by the work of the devils, as I reckon. I do not know. But you, Father, please show me the will of God and get me out of my thoughts which bother me, by your prayers, and please strengthen me to do that what you will tell me to do, and forgive me.

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[647] Everything you ask for God will fulfill it. And God can fulfill everything. But the spiritual man knows what he should ask for. He asks for the things which are beneficial to him and to others, or he asks for those things which are according to their measure, or to their capacity of understanding, or receiving, and of using the received things.

[648] There are diverse ways of ceaselessly remember God: some of them are more superficial, while others are deeper: by fulfilling one or more of God's commandments; by placing every done thing in connection with God.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Listel to me, brother, and be convinced into the Lord, that since I have commanded you to take this job, out hand and our heart are with you. And there is also with you the hand of God, for we have been praying to Him for the salvation of your soul, and for getting you strengthened for this job, and for your good honor and covering into this job. And you cannot be saved except thus. Therefore, you must not get disgusted of it, and if you fall you must rise again; if you have mistaken, you will rebuke on yourself until God will have mercy on you and He will do to you what you desire. You must only not to get lazy to it. You must dare, for the Lord Himself Who appointed you to this job, He will help you. And we take care together with you, in order the devil not to deceive you with the desire of getting rid of this job. This is because it was said: "By their nice and flattering words, they deceive the hearts of the innocent" (Rom. 16: 18). He Who has appointed you to this job, he is the One Who told His disciples: "Behold, I am sending you" (Mt. 10: 16). And again: "Behold, I am with you" (Mt. 28: 20). Do not fear and do not cogitate at the fact that the businesses of the infirmary depend on you. Do not allow yourself to be burdened by the worry about your weakness. If you understand the things written by me to you, it won't be difficult to you. You must only take heed at yourself according to your power, and God will help you. Be strong into the Lord, and be strengthened into Him.

331. The question of the same one towards the other Oldman: How could I correct the brothers who are together with me, without causing disturbance, if they mistake?

The answer of John: If you firstly will imprint in an exemplary way the will of God within your heart, you won't get disturbed[649], but you will become accustomed to work as the

[649] It is a great thing for somebody to know what is useful to him: and to ask for that. It is in this not only the feeling of all the things possible to God, but also knowing what is useful to a man or to another. It is a great penetration into the ocean of the powers and of the richesses of God and into the diverse measures of the people, who can receive out of those richesses that what is useful to them on that moment. But into humbleness there are received the greatest goods. This is for no wall of the pride stops those goods from being received. God "gives grace to the humble". In humbleness there is the self-freedom, there is the total openness to

Fathers do. And if you do not take heed at yourself and you get kidnapped[650], you will tell to God your repentance: "Forgive me, Master, and have mercy on me". But you will also tell to those who are together with you: "Take heed, brothers, at the fact that because of this we are condemned and we lose our souls"[651]. Do not shout out too loudly, but only as loud as they could hear you. And if you restrain yourself into these things, there will come to you that peace according to God.

God Who doesn't show that what is characteristic to Him in a power that crushes, but He shows that in the kindness free of any narrowing passion.

[650] There is a good kidnapping into ecstasy, when you forget about the worry for yourself; and there is also a bad kidnapping, when you are carried away by a passion of yours and you forget about your true self. Then you no longer do your will but you will fulfill a passionate impulse. The leader of the community tells then, out of the rage that kidnapped him, heavy words to the brothers, and so the brothers are bothered.

[651] In case of the passionate rebuking, both the leader and the brothers will be lost. This for they get mad on one another. The scourge spreads. The sin which the people from the newer times laugh at it, as at a business that is scrupulously particular, it actually has a social dimension, as the virtue does too. The effect doesn't limit within the being of him who commits the sin, but the effect will have social repercussions. The bad apple makes bad the apples around. The responsibility of the man for himself it is, in the same time, a responsibility for others. But the whole responsibility is not only a connection among people, but also between people and God. They who do not feel themselves accountable in front of God, they do not feel accountable either to one another. Where from could come the absolute force of the responsibility if not from a superior forum who sown it within us? And why should I be so responsible for the being of my fellow human if that being was perishable? In this unconditional force of the responsibility for my fellow human it is implied his eternal value. I have bee created in order I to unconditionally answer for others (and by that, for me too). Who has made me thus? Who has placed me in this absolute dependence but which I can manifest my freedom into? Who has created me so that I made dependent on me the fate of others and of mine? A superior forum has made me dependent on Him, but in freedom, for I can answer in a way or another that accountability in front of Him, responsibility which He has sown it within me; of course, I will assume grave risks if I do not answer that responsibility or if I answer it wrongly. He has created me as a being whom my fate and the father of others depend on. The responsibility is a prime mode which God ties us through, to one another and to Him, but in freedom. On the other hand, the reciprocal dependence among us we should exert it with maximum gentleness, while reciprocally respecting our freedom, and by promoting the growth of the sensitiveness and of the gentleness in reciprocity.

An external nature, one lacking a conscience and lacking the gentleness, in addition to the fact that it would be more inexplicable in its existence than a supreme person-like forum, it couldn't explain the human freedom and responsibility, which constitute the sole noblesse of the man. Besides, why would I speak and what meaning would have a freedom of theirs? How could be the man responsible of his freedom? And why the man would be preoccupied with his responsibility?

332. The question of the same one; I pray you, Father, tell me how must be the way of correction? And when should I play dumb and overlook the happening things? And if I am unsuccessful, will I decide a punishment to myself?

The answer of John: You must always work according to the people. If you see that one is understanding and he received your advice, you will tell him: "Brother, if we do the thing of God lazily (Jer. 31: 10), that will bring us the perdition of our soul. Was that you have done, a good thing? Be zealous from now on". And if the brother in more unexperienced, you will tell him: "Brother, do you need to be corrected for the fact that you are getting lazy? If I told this to Abba, he would rebuke you as it is due". And if you play dumb, you will do that according to the mistake. If that mistake is a small mistake, you will play dumb. But if that mistake is a big mistake, you won't play dumb. And you won't punish yourself because of not succeeding in that, but neither you will disregard your unsuccess. When you reach to such things, you will pray God for forgiveness. Otherwise, there will be born the indifference.

333. The question of the same one: If somebody among the brothers makes a mistake, or even among patients, and I want to correct him, and I tell him an upsetting word, will I bow down before him? And if he gets angry and leaves the infirmary, will if bow down in front of him? This is for my pride and my will to self-justification darken my mind. And if I bow down before him there will also occur my vain-gloriousness.

The answer of John: After getting upset you won't say anything more. This is for the evil doesn't give birth to good. But you must prolong your patience until will cease the thought which has caused the upset. And then you will speak peacefully. And if that one will be convinced, behold it is good. And if not, you tell him: "If you want me to, I will tell to Abba and he will decide what we should do". And so, you will get appeased. And if that brother will leave you, wondering about what you have said to him, you will tell Abba about that and Abba will rebuke him. But do not bow down before him, because by doing so you will make him suspecting you of being wrong and you will suffer an even harsher war. Towards other

people, thought, you will behave attentively, according to the mistake known to you. If your mistake is big, you will bow down before them; if you mistake is small one, you will express your heart's sorrow only by mouth, telling him: "Forgive me, brother". But shun yourself from pride and from the will of self-justification. This is for these two impede the repentance. This is for it happens one to bow down before somebody out of vain-gloriousness too. You must despise these three ones. So, you will bow down, there where you should to, in the fear of God and with right-reckoning (with discernment)[652]. And you must put in this the whole your determination. And God will help you by the prayers of the saints.

334. Question: If while I am helping the patients there comes the hour for reading the psalms, of for reading the holy Proskomide, or some other needs, and the brothers working together with me they know what they should give to any patient, do you command me to leave or just this is my duty? And if I want to sit in my monastic cell when there is not need for me at the infirmary, do you allow me that, Father?

If the brothers know, there is not a duty for you to leave, neither to sit within your monastic cell, but you most only examine the patients.

335. Question: If by giving to somebody, sometime, according to his needs, I notice that my avarice stopes me, so

[652] The humbleness is sustained by the fear of God. The humbleness opposes to pride, to vain-gloriousness, and to the man's will of self-justification, which all of them make the man's sensitiveness blunt. He who self-justifies, he won't admit that he has committed any sin. He doesn't want to repent, so that he doesn't use the possibility of correcting himself, of changing in good the course of his life. This is another sort of pride. Or, this is another way of manifestation of the pride and of the responsibility's bluntness. These ones lock the man up in his narrowness, out of which he will no longer be able to see the light that is above himself, and that is above all realities, namely the light of God. Bowing down in front of somebody else, as admission of the own mistake, one must do it not only with that humbleness sustained by the fear of God, but he must do that also with discernment or with the right-reckoning, lest he will deceivingly make him whom he addresses himself to think that him who bows down has really mistaken. This bowing down before another it is the getting out of the one's superficial self, it is the self-placing into the admitted and respected mystery of another, but also in the open-into-indefinite mystery of God.

that I give him less, should I bestow him more than needed, or should I force myself to not give him less than he needs[653] [654]*? And, if out of the shame coming to me out of my desire for being pleasant to people, or out of my vain-gloriousness, my thought urges me to give him more, should I give him less, in order to reject this passion, or should I give him only as much he needs, for the commandment?*

The answer of John: If your avarice stopes you from giving to your brother according to his need, you will do according to the case. If you have much, you will give him a little more than he needs. If you have less, you will give him exactly as much as he needs. If, because of your vain-gloriousness, of because of your desire to be pleasant to people, you want to give him more than he needs, you won't do that, but, in this case too, you will give him exactly as much as he needs. May God make your heart wise, brother.

336. Question: If I receive a thing and I need that thing to infirmary, but I see that I am getting attached to that thing, will the desire to keep it for myself be a passion?

The answer of John: If you need a thing and you are warred by the thought of having that thing, you will tell to your thought: "I need it, why should I take it lustily?". And if the passion ceases, you will take that thing. And if your passion doesn't cease, if possible, you will use another thing in order to satisfy your need, and so you will defeat your passion. And if you cannot do otherwise, take that thing while condemning yourself and saying: "I wouldn't take it if I did not need it, for I am defeated by my lust".

337. Question: Somebody bestowed me a coat, and I have received it joyfully, not refusing it. But by examining myself I have ascertained that I received that coat without needing it, but

[653] (this number is unidentified in the text) Reading the psalms is that what has been developed for Matins. As we can see, that preceded or accompanied the Proskomide even back then. So, this too existed at the beginning of the Century VI.
[654] Does it suffice not to be another given less than he should be?

rather because of my greediness. So, my thought tells me: "Give that coat back". What do you command me to do?

Answer: let's praise him who has bestowed that coat with the whole his heart and let's reproach to ourselves for accepting that coat with the whole our souls, and let's wear nit with humbleness, while condemning on ourselves. And let's further on guard ourselves against greediness.

338. The question of the same one: If it happens that somebody wants to bestow me a thing and I need that thing, but I see my heart wanting to accept that thing because of my passion, what will I do: will I take that thing due to my need, or will I reject that thing because of my passion?

The answer of John: It happens in this case as in the case of the food. You know that we need food on every day, but we have not the right of eating it with pleasure. But if we eat it, we give thanks to God Who gives us that food, and we rebuke on ourselves as being unworthy of receiving that food. God makes out of that food a holy thing and a blessing. Likewise, when you need a thing and that thing is given to you, you will thank God Who has given that thing to you, while you are reckoning on yourself as unworthy. And God will banish away your passion from yourself[655]. This is for "at God everything is possible and

[655] The things too are given to us for in the relationships we have with them us to grow up spiritually. By using the things, we must remember God with thankfulness, for He has given the things to us for our needs, and by that the things place us in connection with God Who thinks at us. But the things also can be to us towards our temptation and towards our enslavement when we do not use them with restraint. And by using the things with restraint, we will strengthen ourselves towards them, and we will give others too, the possibility of using the things. So, our position towards things is not reduced to the position of masters, or of some indifferent and greedy consumers of those things. If we did so, we would rather become the slaves of the things. So, it depends on us to get sanctified through material things, or to advance into passions through the material things. It depends on us to actualize the quality of the material things as means for our sanctification, as signs of God's blessing, or us to defile the material things by the filth from within us. It depends on us to see the material things as transparent to the godlike sanctifier Ghost, or as the ultimate opaque reality means only to satisfy the covetousness of our body. God shows us His love for us through the things He has given to us, in two ways: by giving us what we need for our earthly life, and by leading us to consummation. There are words having a twofold or a threefold purpose, which express something of the richness of thoughts of God. Those words can place us in connection with God, of they can lock us up within their opaqueness.

nothing is impossible" (Job 42: 2). For His is the glory forever. Amen.

339. Another brother asked the same Oldman: There is a commandment of the Lord that I must love my neighbor as on myself (Lev. 18: 19), and I to get sad and I to rejoice together with him, as for my limb (1 Cor. 12: 16). So, if I see my neighbor in poverty and I overlook him, I will disregard the love even though I myself don't' have but the things I strictly need, and I don't have enough in order to give him too that what he needs. Tell me, therefore, Father, how can I show my lose in such a case?

The answer of John: The love for the neighbor can be shown in many ways, not only by giving him something. For instance: when you go somewhere together with your neighbor and you find within yourself the thought that you enjoy more honor than he received, but you do not want him to enjoy the same honor as yourself, you won't reckon him as yourself. This is because the Apostle said: "in honor giving you primacy to one another" (Rom. 12: 10). If you have something to eat, and if you see your thoughts urging you to eat alone according to your lust, and contrary to your need, you won't reckon your neighbor as yourself[656]. But if we want to fulfill only in this way the word

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We are getting sanctified through the material things when we see them and when we make them milieus of the energies of God, and when we exercise ourselves in dominating our immeasurable lusts for the material things, and when we maintain our awareness about the material things being gifts form God for all people, and when we show that by consecrating some of the material things to God, and when we place on some material things the sign of God (as churches, as objects imprinted with the sign of the cross, as offerings sanctified in the church). When we do the sign of the cross on the material things before using them, we remember God in Trinity Who has given those things to us in order us to use them with restraint. But when we consummate material things without raising out thought at God, and without making upon them the sign of the cross, we look at the material things as independent from God and we no longer impose to ourselves any brake in gathering and using them. In such a case we are worse than animals, for the animals do not gather more than they need for quenching their hunger on a given moment. When we see the material things as gifts from God bestowed to everybody, we allow others to use them too, or we help others to benefit of them, or we even process the material things by using our labor in order to make them accessible to other people who are weaker, or we us the material things in common in case we cannot divide them in distinct shares for each human being (the air, the water etc.). In such a case the material things are used also for developing the friendship among people and for developing the reciprocal gratitude.

[656] Loving another as on yourself means placing yourself in a position of total objectivity towards yourself, by reckoning another as your equal. Only God is in this position of

of the Scripture, that won't uphold us into this. This is for we haven't been told that only for a certain man, but for all the people presented as our neighbors. But how could you fulfill this with all the people by not having what to give to everyone?

But loving your neighbor as on yourself it also means this: If some misfortune hits the community and you see your thought rejoicing of the fact that another got more loss than you, in that you will show that you do not love him as on yourself. And again, if you see another being praised and you don't' rejoice together with him, because of not being yourself praised, and you do not say "the praise brought to my brother it extends upon myself too, for he is my limb", neither in such a case you will prove that you love your neighbor as on yourself[657]. And likewise in the similar cases.

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objectivity towards all people, and only by advancing towards this position of His we will advance towards our supreme level of aspiration towards objectivity. But hit subjectivity of God isn't an indifferent one, so that neither our must be an indifferent objectivity. God's position is one of deep love for everyone. So, our positions to must reach to be the same: full of love for all people, but also for our own person. Let's love on one another and on ourselves as God loves us, and let's want to reach as He wants us to be. In this love of everybody for everyone, in this universal loving objectivity, we get united with God. It is appropriate I to love on myself as I love others and as we all are loved by God: as wonderful mysteries. For making things clearer, we owe to also answer the following question: Doesn't the full love make somebody to forgive about himself and even to give his live for the beloved one? The mother, whose love is a role model, won't she give her life for her child? How can be this reconciled with the commandment: love another as on yourself (namely, only as much as you love on yourself)? The answer seemingly reconciling these two is: He who is able to give his life for another, he has reached the state of his full accomplishment, that state that provides him his citizenship in the eternal kingdom of the consummate love. Now he must take care of another so that that one too to reach the same supreme stage. So, he is able to give his life for that one because he actually won't lose his life by doing that, but he will have his life on a superior plan and he will help the another to reach that superior plan as well. Or, he just must give his life in order to show that he has reached the supreme accomplishment of his, and in order to make the another too to ascend to that state by the example of supreme love shown to him. The capacity of somebody to bestow on himself for another, it shows us that there is somewhere this plan of existence which the people can be accomplished on, in a superior degree, an existence plan which the most authentic essence of ours aspires to.

[657] The love for another equal to the love for your own person has at its basis the fact that we actually aren't separated, and everything that enriches somebody will be communicated to me too, and everything which causes loss to somebody will do the same to me. But, on the other hand, this unity will be actualized only in love. Where there is not love, this unity will get torn apart. Thus, I love another for I am united with him, but I won't be able to actualize this unity and I won't be able to live it, if I do not use my love. So, I must have the courage for loving another while being us convinced that we actually are united, even if I am not yet feeling that, and by trusting I the fact that by love I will be able to actualize that unity and to fully discover that unity. The unity among us isn't only a given (Gabe) but it is also a duty (Aufgabe). In love one fore-feels the unity, but the unity will be accomplished also through love, of course

Loving your brother as on yourself it also means this: If you have found out from the Fathers the path to God and your brother asks you about that, you won't enviously deny him that knowledge, for you know that he is your brother, and therefore you will tell him that what you will have found out, in the fear of God; but you won't reckon yourself as a teacher. This is because of not being that beneficial to you.

340. The question of the same one: Is it good you to have a friendship with somebody of the same age?

Answer: It is good not to have a too intense friendship with somebody of the same age with you. This is for such a soul state wont' allow you to reach the crying. But you smut not make friends with somebody that deprives you of your crying, regardless what age he would be[658]. This won't be beneficial to you, but it will rather be damaging to you. This is for nobody can earn something good without mush effort, so that you must restrain your eyes not to take heed at somebody, and so you won't fill your heart up with the awful daring that leads to perdition all the fruits of the monk.

341. The question of the same one: If I hear about somebody that he is in a big war, or that he is sick, and I compassionate together with him, tell me, in the first place, if this compassion won't be from devils and aiming to make me forget about my sins? And the, will it be useful if I remember him in my prayers? And how will I be able to help him, if I am in a bigger danger and in graver sins? But what will I do if the brother asks me for that? And if he asks me for that, will I tall about that to somebody among the Fathers? Or, will it the prayer for the neighbor accustom the passionate one to love too? What do you reckon, Father?

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because it exists there as a bud that must be developed. The ontological on our created plan cannot be fully accomplished except through ethical. God has given us the seeds, but He let us the duty to make these seeds grow through our efforts. God has called us to be His collaborators: "be (become) that what I have given you the possibility to be (to become)".

[658] The friendship gladdens, it upholds within man a state of good mood, it makes the man to find in another a satisfaction of life. But the monk must rather cry for his sins.

The answer of John: The Fathers told to the younger one that nobody should leave his own dead and go to cry for another dead (Paterikon, Moses 18). This is because it is appropriate only to the consummate ones to suffer together with their neighbor. But if a young man compassionates with another, that will be the mockery from the devils. This is for the young man stupidly judges the another, as one who is in a bad state and in danger. While he reckons himself as working well. That's why to a young man will be more beneficial if he doesn't take care of another. And if the memory of that one comes within his heart, of if the hears from somebody else about that one, let him say: "may God have mercy both on me and on him"[659].

And you must not tell by yourself to somebody among Fathers to pray for someone, because that will mean that that thing starts from you[660]. If you want to run away from this, you will only remember to the Father that certain brother suffers. And by hearing that, the Father will pray himself for that brother who is sick in his ghost. And if somebody asks you to tell the Father to pray for him, you will fulfill this request for you have been ordered to, by telling to the Father: "Pray, Father, for him". And if that one tells you:" "Pray for me", you will tell him likewise, as by fulfilling a commandment: "Lord please forgive us", or: "May God help us", or: "Shelter us, Lord, in this thing"[661]. And you won't reckon that you do that as starting from yourself, for you have been asked to tell that, and you have obeyed that request. But commiserating with somebody out of love, you haven't proven yet that you have reached such a measure of consummation. And if this thought

[659] You won't be able to heal another of the evilness of his passions, if you haven't healed yourself in the first place. You will vainly commiserate for another, if in that you let to be understood your superiority. So, here is not recommended the indifference, but it is recommended the way of the true help granted to another. One must quench the fire firstly within himself so that not to fuel up the fire into another too.

[660] Do not present to the Oldman as having yourself the initiative for escaping the another. You must humble yourself, by letting him to have the initiative or the impression. Otherwise, you will leave the impression that you are better that him who suffers of some passion, or of some illness, and that his help starts from you. In this case too, your help is problematic, because it might not be accepted.

[661] Do not pray only for the another, as you would be in a superior position and you won't need prayer at your turn, but you will pray for him and for yourself by reckon yourself together-sinner with him. This is not an egotistic care for yourself, but it is a liberation from your vain-gloriousness.

will still disturb you, you must ask and you will hear what you should do. May God have mercy on you, brother!

342. The question of the same one: tell me, Father, how far must go the love of a brother for another brother?

The answer of John: Brother, something else is the love of the parents for their children, and something else is the love of the brothers to their brothers. The measure of the spiritual Fathers for their spiritual sons doesn't have anything harmful nor bodily in itself. This is for they are assured through their spiritual thought. And either in words or in deeds, they always strive to be beneficial to the young ones, in all things. And thus, because of loving them, they won't keep their silence regarding their mistakes, but they often reproach them and rebuke them as their sons. This is for it was said: "Reproach, rebuke, advise" (2 Tim. 4: 2). This is being done to you also by your Abba and you do not get offended by his reproaches, and rebuke, and urges. And in the fact that out of love he doesn't overlook your mistakes it is shown that his love for you is a spiritual love.

Each one loves his neighbor according to his measure. And the measure of the consummate love is that as after the love one has for God, him to love his neighbor too as on himself (Lev. 19: 18). But the youth must guard itself in all things. This is because of the devil quickly toppling over the young people. Firstly, they start speaking when they meet together as for the benefit of their souls. Ot maybe without this reason as well. And then they cross to other feelings: to lust, to daring, to laughter, to slander, and to many other evils. Sot is if fulfilled in their case the saying: "starting from ghost, you are finishing now into body. You have suffered all these things vainly" (Gal. 3: 3). This is because the young people reach to fall in this way: from starting to love on one another without judgment, and from sitting together. Let the measure of their reciprocal love to be this: not to slander on one another, not to hate on one another, not to despise on one another, not to pursuit their own goals, not to love on one another for the beauty of their bodies, neither for a certain bodily work, not to sit together without a certain

need, and not to fall into daring[662] that destroys all the fruits of the monk (Paterikon, Agathon 1) and it leaves the monk as a dry tree. Until here there is the measure of the love for the young ones. If they spare themselves by restraining their daring and their vain-speaking, they will spare their brothers as well, by avoiding to sit together needlessly, in order they not to be caught in these snares, neither they to catch their brothers, by fearing Him Who said: "Woe to him who waters his neighbor with mirky water" (Hab. 2: 15); and again; "The ad words corrupt the good habits" (1 Cor. 15: 33). Take heed at yourself, brother!

343. The question of the same one: What should I do for I am troubled by dirty thoughts and if I feel that others have such thoughts I will always say: "Behold, other think too the evil things as I do". And then the crying doesn't come to me, neither the repentance, and my thought tells me that as long as I am among people I won't be able to achieve those. Have mercy on my helplessness, and tell me, Father, how can I be saved from those?

The answer of John: If you have dirty thoughts and if you feel or hear that somebody else is in this state too, and if you say: "Behold that, others too, they cogitate the evil things as I do", you will give your thoughts to anathema, and you will say about your brother: He is better than I am". And that thought will leave you alone. Regarding your crying, if you do not fight towards the people whom you are among, and if you do not strive not to reach the daring with somebody among them, your crying, and your repentance won't come to you[663]. And if your

[662] The daring tears down the border between person and person, by the fact that one no longer sees the mystery of another, but only his bodily surface. This doesn't mean a communication of their deeps into God, in which they preserve their self-awareness, but they conscience disappears by being chocked up by their bodily lust that confounds them superficially.

[663] It is a fight towards people not out of hatred, but on the purpose of not reaching a sinful familiarness. This is because this one will make you to trivialize your thought at your sins, and your sadness and your crying for your sins. The society maintains a superficialness, that "Man" of Heidegger, which you will impropriate to yourself through, the way of speaking generally and superficially; in society they talk even about death while laughing: "we are going to die", but no one seriously thinks at that what he says. Only when you are alone, you give a serious meaning to your words and you really see your sins. Or, even when you are

desire for correcting yourself it makes you running away from your brothers, take heed at the fact that by doing so you will run away from the battle and from the stadium. So, you must fight so that when you are among people, you to defeat your own daring (familiarness) towards them[664]. This is for the Apostle says: "If somebody fights, he won't be crowned if he doesn't fight according to the law" (2 Tim. 2: 5). Set your power in work, brother, and God will help you in all the things. Do not forget to guard your humbleness your obedience, and your submission. And you will be saved[665] into Christ Jesus our Lord Whom is due the glory forever. Amen.

344. Another brother asked: Abba, I want to be saved but I do not know the path to salvation. A though tell me: "Why do you sit here in monastery, doing nothing? Go elsewhere!" Why should I do?

The answer of John: Brother, God showed us the path to salvation through the godlike Scriptures. But also, the Fathers advised us, saying: "ask your Father and he will teach you; ask your old men and they will tell you" (The Second Law 32: 7; Paterikon, Anthony 37). So, if you want not to be deluded by

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together with others, you can direct your thought upon yourself. Only then you live your "existential".

[664] The monk should not run away from monastery, namely form the people living into monastery, by invoking as reason that the example and the advice from others would tempt him to justifications. But the monk must not renounce to repent for his sins. So, the monk must combine both of them: to learn from people their good things, but not to allow himself mixed in superficial discussions with people. Neither must the monk fall into deeds of daring with the others. On one hand, he can gain from his fellow humans, by learning out of their advices, and out of their example, but on the other hand he can be tempted to evil or to bragging himself. But in this sentiment of responsibility, it is united the duty of being together with others, with the possibility to progress in the good things. The responsibility is a means of purifying the relationships with the fellow humans, and it is a means of spiritual inward growth. On the other hand, we must thing at the fact that there is a Subject Who willingly lives the responsibility for all of us, at the peak, which we too must tend towards, without being us able to ever reach that; in Christ the godlike responsibility has been made us known concretely. Christ went all the way to His death for us. And He continues his savior work of responsibility after His resurrection as well. Out of His responsibility work we too sip strength for the sentiment of an unconditional responsibility.

[665] When you reach to fell that by yourself you are nothing, but you still exist, then you will that you exist through God Who is the only one Who cannot feel that He is nothing. And by feeling that you are what you are through God, you will fully live God's power. And this will make your salvation possible.

leaving, you will keep the humbleness that will be beneficial and you will do nothing without asking the spiritual Fathers about it. And, by the grace of God, you won't go astray. This is for "God wants all the people to be saved and they to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2: 4).

345. The question of the same one: My thought tells me that if I go somewhere and if I live in withdrawal, I will reach the consummate quietude. This is because I am burdened by the debts of many sins and I want to liberate myself from those. What should I do, Father?

The answer of John: Brother, the debtor, until he pays his debt, wherever he goes, either in the city, or in a village, and wherever he settles down, he still remains a debtor and he has not the freedom of sitting into quietude. But if he pays his debt because of being forced and shamed up by the reproaches of the people, and so he liberates himself of hid debt, he will be able to show himself to the world and he will be able to sit wherever he will want, with courage and with much daring. So, if the man endures with the whole his power the reproaches and the condemnations and the dishonor and the losses caused by his sins, he will get accustomed to humbleness and to toil. And so, his sins will be forgiven to him, as it was written: "See my humbleness and my tiredness and forgive me all my sins" (Ps. 24: 18[666]). Think at how many reproaches and condemnations endured our Master Christ before cross and that He only after those came to the cross (Abbe Isaïe, Recueil, 868; p. 104; 13, 23; p. 115, 117). Thus, nobody will be able to reach with fruits to consummation and to the holy resting of the consummation, if he doesn't suffer, firstly, together with Christ, and if he doesn't suffer Christ's sufferings, by remembering the word of the Apostle: "If we suffer together, we will be glorified together" (Rom. 8: 17)[667].

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[666] In KJB we have: Ps. 25: 18: "Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins."; in ROB we have: Ps. 24: 19: "See my humbleness and my tiredness and forgive me all my sins." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[667] One will not be able to get the evil out of the nature without straining the nature. The sin, the passions, they represent a weakening of the nature. Not simply the sufferance strengthens and delivers the nature from evil, but the enduring of the sufferance, which presents a straining, a using of all the power reserves, accompanied by the asking, with trust, for the help

So, you must not delude yourself, because of not existing any other path except this one. May the Lord come to your help, according to His will, for, as it is said in the Gospel, you to found your building on the hard rock, that is Himself (Mt. 7: 2; 1 Cor. 10: 14).

346. A brother asked the Great Oldman, saying: Pray for me so that God will have mercy on me, for I am wicked.

The answer of Barsanuphius: He who wants to find mercy, let him keep the commandment of not eating out of the tree, and by doing so he won't fall into disobedience. And he who doesn't fall into disobedience, he will find mercy and he will be saved through the grace of Christ our God. This is for he will tell to his thought: "I and God are alone in the world" (Paterikon, Alonius 1), and if I do not do His will I won't be found as belonging to Him, but as belonging to the foreign

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from God, that represents at its turn, a straining of the power. And the restraint from the pleasures which tempt us, it is also a straining, a suffering of the temptation without the bending that cedes. But the name of patience, it is more properly used against the temptation of running away from pain, against the tendency of getting out from under the pain. The glory of the nature is that state which the nature no longer feels in either the superficial attraction towards pleasure of the body's pain, when the ghost has overwhelmed the body's life. But on the ghost depends the will too. Without getting experienced in the effort of the will the ghost won't be able to become strong, in order to overwhelm the body's pleasure and pain. This was the purpose of the sufferance of Christ and of the cross He bore. His human nature had to go to the supreme degree of the endurance, that is the suffering of the death, in order to fully get strengthened. A last moment ceding would have been a slipping away from everything He had achieved through His previous sufferings. You have to give your life in order to gain your life, through the supreme strength of your life, on that plan that is superior to any weakness. This doesn't exclude the fact that Christ suffered out of compassion for us too, or also in order Him to show us His love. Properly-said, these ones stay at the basis of His sufferance, which He defeated the weakness from within our nature through, that weakness consequent to the ancestral sin, a weakness that was going by ceding under pleasure and under pain, until it was defeated through death. There had to happen this strengthening and liberation in the first fruit of our nature assumed by Christ, in order to pass to us too the power for defeating the pleasure and the pain related top passions. So, it was not about Christ paying for an offence brought o God's honor, because if that was the case, we shouldn't "suffer" together with Christ at out turn. But it is about ourselves getting strengthened by enduring the pain. Christ suffered for us in the sense that only Him could have been the first to really strengthen our nature through Hiss cross, and out of the communication with Him we too receive the power for strengthening our nature and so to liberate our nature from weakness. His patience is the spring of our patience, and His patience strengthens us too.

one”[668]. He who tells that, he will wait on each day for his end and for meeting God[669]. And he will immediately start walking of the path of the salvation.

347. A brother, after falling to a temptation, he asked for the prayer of the same Great Oldman and after he was relieved from that temptation, he announced the Great Oldman about that and he thanked the Great Oldman. In the same time, that brother asked the Great Oldman to pray for his headache that came to him and for his heart to be enlightened.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, let’s take heed at ourselves, with the fear of God. And if God, with His love for people He removes the war from us, we will have not become careless either. This is because many after getting relieved, they no longer took care of themselves, and they fell on their head. But after we have got alleviated, let’s give thanks to God for He has delivered us, and let’s remain praying in order us not to fall into the same passions or in other passions. If one ate a food and he got harmed to his liver of to his spleen, and by the care and by the craftsmanship of the doctor he got cured, he would no longer be careless of himself, lest something even worse to happen to him, but he would always remember the previous danger, as the Lord told also to the one healed by Him: “See, you are now healthy, do not sin from now on, lest something worse will happen to you” (Jn. 5: 15).

Brother, the good soldiers exercise also in time of peace, and always, in order they to learn the craftsmanship of the war. This is for it is inappropriate to the soldier to quickly inquire the things of war in time of war. This is for it was written: “I have prepared myself and I haven’t got troubled” (Ps. 118: 60[670]). Do not be indifferent towards the passion which you have been

[668] I must behave myself like there are nobody else in the world except God and me. Therefore, I can do either my will or God’s will. But if I do my will, I won’t be reckoned as belonging to God, but as belonging to myself, and as stranger to God, or as belonging to the enemy whose will I do. By doing my will, I prove myself to be the slave of my pride or of him who instilled me my pride.

[669] He who is searching for fulfilling his own will, he won’t fear his death because he deludes on himself that he won’t die soon and so he still has plenty of time to satisfy his lusts.

[670] In KJB we have: Ps. 119: 60: “I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 118: 60: “I was ready and I didn’t get troubled for keeping your commandments.” (E. l. t.’s n.)

tempted by, neither towards any other passion. This is because the Fathers told about this indifference that it loses the monk's fruits (Paterikon, Agathon 1). The man must be careful regarding the war to the last of his breaths, in order him not to fall into the trap set by the all-cunning enemy, whom may the Lord banish him away from us with the Ghost of His mouth. Remember that an old man said: "If the man had created a new sky and earth, he still wouldn't have been worriless" (Paterikon, Poemen 48)[671].

As about the headaches, the man must fight not to get drowsy, and he will be helped. This is because, by finding His disciples drowsy, the Lord told them: "Take vigil and pray, in order you not to enter the temptation" (Mt. 26: 41).

Son, may Him Who has enlightened the eyes of the blind enlighten also the eyes of your heart, in order you to know that is good and useful. And the God of the powers, Who said: "Him who believes all the things will be possible" (Mt. 9: 22), may Him give you power and support you in the consummate faith. And may I see you together with the saved ones, by the grace of the Leader of our souls Who is Jesus Christ Whom it is due the glory forever. Amen.

347 bis. (The French Edition: only in the manuscripts: Vatopedi no. 2, Sinai 410, Cromwell 18, and in G.) *A brother who locked his door for a while, he was tormented by thoughts and by secret dreams. ON the other hand, he wanted to stop drinking wine. He opened himself to the Great Oldman.*

Answer: Brother, if you truly want to be saved ad to get rid of the devils of the pride, you will have to endure a little humbleness, for that is like slapping him in the face. And do not search for being served by somebody, by take care of

[671] If the man had made his being "a new sky and a new earth", namely a new mind united with the sky and a new earth which the new mind luminates over, and which are crossed through and overwhelmed by the new mind, that mind that is full of Christ's mind, the man still wouldn't have been able to be worriless in this life before the general resurrection. This is for the affects tied to his being, despite they can be controlled, they still can escape the control and they will make the man slide into sin if the man id careless. This confirms Heidegger's saying that the man is characterized by worry. But the care for salvation is more profound than the worldly worries and it concentrates the man into himself. On the contrary, the worldly worries are superficial and they make the man not to seriously think at himself, but they make the man think only at his body's needs.

yourself by your own. This is for Jesus Who said about Himself that he is "gentle and humble in heart" (Mt. 11: 29), He told us: "The Son of Man hasn't come to be served, but to serve" (Mt. 20: 28). Therefore, you must not lock up a wooden door, but you must lock up the door of your heart (Paterikon, Poemen 58). And you must not stop yourself completely from drinking wine, but you smut stop yourself form pride that makes drunk the mindless man. And do not take my example, for I am telling you these while I have been for a long time served by somebody else, so that you could get offended. But there are many people teaching that what they do not do it. These ones are them whom the Lord told about: "Obey them and do what they say you to do, but do not follow their deeds" (Mt. 23: 3). You always leave your monastic cell for your needs which are impossible to replace, but when not needed you won't exist that door. Live orderly and not carelessly. Avoid getting upset on him who rebukes you. And you should rather enjoy that. Regarding your dreams, do not take heed at them, because of being them devilish and liar. And after doing all these things, you won't believe that you have done any wonder. This is for, after fulfilling all the commandments, we have been told to say: "We are worthless servants" (Lk. 17: 10). Still, we will be the ones who will reap that what you have sown into our field, and then we will trade your wheat on your behalf[672]. Make the Lord give us the joy of finding your field bringing forth fruits, for a seed a hundred, for another seed sixty, and for another seed thirty (Mt. 13: 8; Mk. 8: 8) into the glory of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

[672] Do not reckon that you have done a big deal by fulfilling the commandments. This is for the road of the consummation is endless, and everything you do you do with the help from God. But your spiritual father can value your progress. The individual must not value his own victories. This is because this is the temptation towards pride. But his spiritual father can value his victories especially for he has been guiding him into the good things. And the spiritual father too, he will reap the harvest of this efforts of sowing, a result shown in the toil of the spiritual son of having fruits brought forth. And the spiritual father will be able to praise the fruits brought forth by his spiritual son, but in front of God. So, the spiritual father will be able to insists for his spiritual son to receive the best possible rewards or valuation. This is for, by doing so, he won't rick to fall into self-praise. This is for, even if the spiritual father sees within the fruits of his spiritual son the seed sown there by the spiritual father, he actually will praise the efforts of the spiritual son for making that seed bringing forth fruits, and the spiritual father won't praise his own work of sowing those seeds.

348. A layman brother of the same Great Oldman, being himself old too, he sent to the Great Oldman a request for having a discussion. And the Great Oldman answered him the followings: "I have Jesus as my brother. If you despise the world and if you become a monk, you will by my brother too". After hearing that, the layman brother left very saddened. After a while, that layman brother rejected the world, and he came to the monastery, but he fell ill and because of suffering of dropsy, so that he let the Great Oldman now about his illness.

The Great Oldman answered him the followings: This illness came to you only in order you not to leave for God without fruits. So, if you endure it and if you thank for it, and it will be counted for you as ascesis, because of not living you for a long time into the monastic schism. And, partially, this trouble has come to you because you have valued me who I am nothing, as you too. On me, as somebody important, and on you as the brother of such a man[673]. And you have forgotten that we are the sons "of Adam's disobedience" (Rom. 5: 14). This is for we are "dust and ashes" (Gen. 18: 27). So, give thanks to God for He has brought you into this state. If we had the humbleness of Christ, we would say: "Who is My Mother and who are My brothers?" and the followings (Mt. 12: 48)[674].

349. A brother who heard from another brother the war which that brother was suffering of, he advised that warred brother as he could the best, but without himself having reached such a measure. And the war immediately started upon himself. And when he saw hismefl burdened and he knew that he had to

[673] The man can get proud not only for what himself is, but also for what his father or for what his brother are, because of wanting to draw upon himself the honor of which those ones enjoy. Let aside the profit they want to get out of their connection with those ones, by intervening in favor of somebody (asking for favors for somebody). That's why, the praised one must reject not only the praise brought to him but also the praise brought to his relatives due to him, on one hand in order him to not enjoy an increased honor produced by the extension of his honor upon his relatives too, and on the other hand in order him not to be guilty because of extending the corruption due to his honor.

[674] It is noticeable the explanation given to this word of Jesus as coming out of His humbleness. Jesus doesn't say: "Make room for My Mother comes", or "for My brothers come. For you know Who I Am". But He says: "As I do not ask for a special honor for Myself, I won't ask that for them either. As I want to serve others, likewise I want them to serve others".

endure that because of not confessing his own weakness to his brother, and that he rather should have asked the Fathers for advices, he announced that to the other Oldman.

The answer of John: Brother, there is no other way but the man should despise on himself for the things he said. And God will forgive him. *And that brother was immediately alleviated and he thanked God.*

350. The question of the same one: If there occur two things harmful to the soul and one must choose one, what should him do?

The answer of John: By weighing in the two harmful things, one must choose the less harmful of the two. This is for it was written by the Fathers that somebody came to borrow money from another and that one didn't lend him the asked money, by telling him: "I have no money". And being him asked later why he didn't lend money to be borrower, he said: "If I lend him money, that would be harmful to his soul. That's why I chose to transgress another commandment, in order his soul not to be totally lost" (Paterikon, John the Persian 2).

351. A brother who was progressing into virtue according to God, he asked the Great Oldman, telling him: Tell me, Aba, a word, because I am sad.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Saint Apostle Paul, who received the power of endurance, he wrote, saying: "You need patience for, by doing the will of God you to earn the promises" (Hebr. 10: 36). So, he who wants to climb the cross together with Christ, he must be partaker to all the sufferings of Christ and him must always have the peace[675]. And I am telling you:

[675] About the purpose of the together-suffering one can see in detail in the footnote 502. (This footnote has in the Romanian translation the no. 509; because of having us to give the cites places from the Psalms due to the existing differences, the footnotes' numbers no longer correspond to the Romanian original. We kindly ask the reader to count five previous footnotes and so to find the footnote mentioned by Saint Dumitru the Restorer of the Christian theology (E. l. t.'s n.)). But that peace that is connected to the suffering it won't come only

"Fight for gaining the thankfulness sin all the things[676]. And the power of the Highest will overshadow you" (Lk. 1: 11). And then you will find your resting.

352. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: What should I do with the mud I have, with my impulse of justifying myself, and with my forgetfulness which torment me awfully?

The answer of Barsanuphius: he who has the mud within himself, he actually can get rid of it whenever he wants. But he who is sunk into mud, he will be plucked out of it only with great efforts. So, it is worse to be sunk into mud than to have the mud within you. Regarding your impulse (to justify yourself), the evil won't ever be able to abolish the evil[677]. And regarding the forgetfulness, take heed that there are two sorts of forgetfulness, and one of them opposes the another[678]. Therefore, you must think that his will of self-justification won't get the man far from his evil and it won't rest him[679]. He who reaches to forget about eating his bread, because of the

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after enduring, but even during the enduring. Abbot Basil from the Holy Mountain Athos says: "He who stays stretched on the cross's wood out of love for another, he rests himself" (Eisodicon). This resting doesn't come only out of the fact that you do everything for another and you won't let him in either his present suffering or in the eternal suffering, but also out of the fact that you defeat the egotistic passionate impulses of yours, which, after short satisfactions, they will torment you forever.

[676] The thankfulness itself is producer of gladness. So, if you paradoxically tie the thankfulness to the pain, you will more easily endure the pain. Besides, the thankfulness is born when you suffer, for you have discovered in thankfulness a positive meaning of your suffering. You see that your suffering has been given to you in order to, by suffering, you to elevate your nature from that weakness that gives birth to sin. But if this amazing power of enduring occurs within you during the pain, there must be working within you also that power from above everything, of God.

[677] If you want to show that the evil done by you isn't actually evil, by doing so you won't abolish the evil done by you, or you won't become good from bad, but you will add another evil to your done evil, because you have become ever more evil, by adding to evil our lie and your pride which you want to cover the evil dome by you with, or you will strengthen even more that evil done by you, by defending it.

[678] Justifying the evil done by you, you won't appease your conscience, neither will you stop the evil done by yourself. And that will further maintain withing you the disturbance and it will increase it, or it will make you even more callous into your insensitiveness.

[679] There are: the forgetfulness about your interests, and the forgetfulness about your duties. The first one is the good one; the second one is the bad one.

moaning of his sigh, he won't be taken into master by that forgetfulness caused by the enemy.

353. The ask of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Add mercy and get me out of the belly of the lion, for the lion has swallowed me. And have mercy on my soul as God from height has. For you have received power for that. This is for "anything you will untie o earth it will be untied in heavens too" (Mt. 18: 48). And do not allow my soul stay in Gehenna and to die in sin. And tell me word according to my understanding (according to my power), so that I could become partaker to your toils.

The answer of Barsanuphius: "May God of Peace Himself sanctify you consummately, and may your ghost and your soul and your body be guarded entirely unblemished, into the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thes. 5: 23). What more comforting word could I send you that this word of the Apostle? Strive to achieve the things written you by me. This is for I toil more than you do, praying God, day and night (2 Tim. 1: 3), until you will reach those. Find out, brother, this: that, as you know, I joyfully put my soul for you and my prayer for you is ceaseless (1 Thes. 5: 17)[680].

[680] The urge of Saint Apostle Paul: "Pray ceaselessly" (1 Thes. 5: 17) it is given after the urge" Always follow the good things towards one another and towards all" (1 Thes. 5: 15). So, the ceaseless prayer must include the attention paid to others. You cannot egotistically separate yourself, in prayer, from the care for others, as all the virtues connect us with others; and in another way the sins do that too, and we must fight and detach ourselves form sins, by increasing in our love for others. Even when I say: "Lord, have mercy on me", at singular, I think at my sins which haven't been committed in an individualistic isolation, but towards other people, and my sins have been influencing others too to commit sins, or we have committed our sins in connection with other people. So, I am praying more or less implicitly for those too, when I pray for my forgiveness. God won't receive me at Him if I lack my love for others, namely if I do not pray for others as well. The prayer for others is one of the forms which our responsibility for one another it is being manifested thought, and this meaning can be seen also in the Great Oldman's word: "I gladly put my soul for you". But this word can also mean: "I will guarantee for you in front of God". He can give this guarantee trusting that his prayer for that one will be heard by God, and also by trusting tat his good influence will be exercised also upon him whom he prays to God for. God, as a spring of love for all people, he rejoices when seeing that out of His love we unite with one another into love, by helping on one another.

354. The question of another. A brother was sent somewhere in order to fulfill a task given him by the monastery. He asked the other Oldman: if he was invited by some friends, could him sit at the table together with women?

The Oldman told him not to sit at the table with women, by any means. Then the brother asked him: where could I know that, when invited by somebody, there will come some woman to eat together with us, so that I wouldn't go?

Father John answered him: Ask him who invites you, if there will be any woman. And if he tells you yes, then you will refuse him, saying: "forgive me, for I have commandment not to sit at the table with any woman".

354 bis. And the brother said: It is happened to be to go by forgetting to ask (or if I was forcedly taken there before I could ask), and I saw a woman come, what should I do?

The Oldman answered him: Call aside him who has invited you and tell him: "Forgive me, because I have forgotten to tell you that I have commandment not to eat together with any woman. So, please let me leave. And if that woman left, you could stay. And if not, you should withdraw yourself, and do not transgress the commandment, lest the death will come to you out of your disobedience. And to not fear. That won't be towards your shame, but towards your building.

355. The question of the same one: If I am sent to fulfill some task, and I haven't received permission to eat, and somebody asks me to eat together with him, and I tell him that I cannot do that because of not having commandment from Abba, but that one insists and forces me, what will I do?

The answer of John: For the noise doesn't give birth to anything good, if you reckon that that thing doesn't harm your soul, you will accept it; and when you come back you announce Abba and you ask him for forgiveness for that mistake. But if you reckon that that is intertwines with some harm, even if that

man insists for tens of thousands of times, you won't accept it. This is because that is obviously a thing of the devil.

356. The question of the same one: I was sent with a task to the holy city (Jerusalem) and I descended to Jordan to pray, without I previously asking Abba for permission for that. Did I do good or bad?

The answer of John: You must not go anywhere without permission. This is because the things one does out of an own thought, even seemingly good, those are not pleasant to God. And keeping Abba's commandment, who sent you, it is a prayer and a serving brought to God Who said: "I haven't come to do my will, but the will of Him Who has sent Me" ((Jn. 6: 38)[681].

357. The question of the same one: If, by leaving for a far destination, I forget to ask Abba about all the things I should do, what will I do?

The answer of John: You must take heed at the happening things and you must do everything according to the benefit of the soul. But you will do that as transgressing the commandment and not as doing something good, because you dare to do something without having a specific commandment for that. And by announcing Abba about that, he will forgive you[682].

358. The question of the same one: If Abba especially command me to do something and, because I am defeated by weakness I will transgress his commandment, what should I do?

[681] When you do the will of God, God does His will through you, or God works through you.

[682] By surrendering your being as an active tool to the will of him who asks you what you have to fulfill, for he is appointed to that by God, you will live the total surrender to the absolute God. This is for God isn't a blind nature, but God is an absolute will Who asks from you that what is good for you. And God does that through another concrete will. By this you show your absolute trust in God. You will no longer interposes between you and God. If your will no longer closes up the entrance towards the interior of your being, then you will feel God in His sovereignty, which you absolutely depend on and you admit that dependency.

The answer of John: Repent before God and before Abba and, for now on, strive to correct yourself. And God will forgive your mistake.

359. Question: A brother whom the gate of the monastery was entrusted to, he got tired because of being alone, and he asked the Great Oldman if he should take another brother with him, or not?

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, if somebody wants to enter there were Jesus is, and if h wants to walk the road of the salvation, he must expect temptations and troubles at any moment. This is for he says: "Son, if you come to serve God, you will have to prepare your souls for temptations" (Sirach 2: 1[683]). And the Lord said: "Let him who comes to Me to reject himself and to take his cross (on each day) and follow Me" (Lk. 9: 33). He who wants to become His disciple, he must obey all to way to death (Phil. 2: 9)[684]. Being alone and making a little effort is better than having a companion in that work[685]. If there occurs

[683] This book is not present in KJB, but it is present in the ROB under the name: *The Book of the Wisdom of Joshua the Son of Sirach (The Ecclesiastes)*. The interested reader can find all the fourteen missing books on www.academia.edu, under the name *Bible Missing Texts*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[684] "Surrender to death" not in a temporal meaning, but in the meaning of receiving even the death, for the obedience to God. This means total surrender to God, or it means bringing yourself as sacrifice to God. he who lives with this disposition, he will always be a "living sacrifice" brought to God, and he is capable of becoming a sacrifice through death too. But he who totally surrenders himself to God, by receiving God within himself, he will be sanctified for he no longer does anything contrary to God, or separately from God, but he does only that what is pleasant to God and out of the power of God (Rom. 12: 1). In this, the believer follows Christ as man. This is for Christ has united the humanity with God by this obedience too. Christ also assumed the human will, but a will that accepted itself to fulfill the godlike will. Christ wasn't, as man, a puppet in the hand of God. But by doing with His own will the godlike will, He united the two wills without confronting them. By that Christ opened Himself as man totally to God. Christ's humbleness is not only a descent to man, but it is also a total openness to God as man, a total union - through His human will - with God. The hypostatic union is the foundation for this total union into Christ of the wills in a sole Person. The human person is given value and strength only by being the man asked for obedience to God. If the man had been simply submitted to the nature's laws, nothing could have been asked for the man, the man would have had no dignity, or no value. God cherishes the man's obedience for God values the man's total love also for the man is capable of that, for God gave the man the value of a free person.

[685] Hos could you show your manhood when you were not able to toil alone for your job? He who appointed you alone to a certain job, he trusted you, he trusted your manhood.

a need, there will always be the possibility for you to be helped by another. And if helped thus, the daring (the familiarness) won't increase, as it will do in the contrary case, if you are always together[686]. And if you do not get disgusted by tiredness, you will reach the humbleness[687]. And if you reach the humbleness, you will receive the forgiveness of your sins[688]. This is for he says: "See my humbleness and my tiredness and forgive me all my sins" (Ps. 24: 18[689]). If you humble yourself, you will receive the grace, and the grace will help you. This is for Saint Paul, toiling more than all the Apostles, he said: "Not me, but the grace that is within me" (1 Cor. 15: 10). If you believe without doubting, you will take power to fulfill not only the job of the doorman, but other jobs too. Therefore, take heed, with trust, at the work of God and God will solve the work without you even know it. May the Lord be with you!

360. Of the same one: Ask for me, Father, power and understanding from God, for I am stupid and helpless. And when it happens that I go out to bring something from the kitchen or form the pantry, and I meet some of the Fathers or some important people, and I don't know: what should I do in such cases? And pray also for me in order I to be delivered from the defilements happening to me.

The answer of Barsanuphius: If you believe that out of barren stones "God can rise the sons of Abraham" (Mt. 3: 9) and he who opened the mouth of the donkey (Num. 22: 28) can also open your mouth and make you wise, and make you sapient and give you power, God, as you already know, will give you all oft those. The gate of the monastery is the gate of God. And God

[686] If you always are together with somebody, you will reach to a daring familiarness with him, and that will deprive you of seriousness.

[687] That tiredness that makes you know the narrow borders of your power, that will humble you. But that will happen with the condition of you not getting drowsy, or getting disgusted of it, but you must bear it with a constant strain.

[688] Through humbleness you receive the forgiveness of your sins, for the humbleness liberates you from your pride that stops you from feeling the need for the forgiveness and therefore it stops you from asking for forgiveness with the whole your perseverance.

[689] In KJB we have: Ps. 25: 18: "Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins."; in ROB we have: Ps. 24: 19: "See my humbleness and my tiredness and forgive me all my sins." (E. l. t.'s n.)

know that His servant the doorman, he needs wisdom, and understanding, and knowledge, and power, and help, and right-reckoning. "This is for God knows what you need before you ask Him for it" (Mt. 6: 8). And if you persevere and endure, you soul will be happy. And when it happens that going and bringing something you meet some of the important persons, without hesitation you put down that what you are carrying, and welcome them with humbleness, and in the fear of God, and God will make your meeting with them to be towards the glory of His name and towards everybody's building[690], with the prayers of the saints. Amen. Regarding the defilements, if your heart gets humble and you reckon yourself as "dust and ashes" (job 42: 6), your humbleness will protect you against any defilement.

361. A brother asked the other Oldman: Tell me, Father, whom should I ask for my thoughts? And should I ask more than one Father about my thoughts?

The answer of John: You must ask him who you trust and whom you have found out about that he can bear the thoughts[691]. And trust him as you trust God. But asking another for the same thought, it is a sign of mistrust and temptation. If you believe that God spoke to His saint, why will you need another proof, or why will you need to tempt God by asking another about the same thing?

[690] Even though you are a simple man, you will welcome them with humbleness and in the fear of God, so that you will make them feel as staring from you the rays of the presence of God, and they will praise God for that what they see at you. But Barsanuphius didn't tell that to that brother in order not to make him lose his humbleness. One who is humble he doesn't see his humbleness, but his humbleness is seen by others. May the Lord make many people to meet for many times towards the glory of God, through the humbleness and the peace and the love which they communicate to one another, out of the humbleness and the peace and the love of Christ.

[691] It is difficult to keep within you and not to spread further the ugly thoughts communicated to you by somebody. In order to do that one needs a special gift and an accentuated conscience that God forbids you from spreading what you hear. That's why the priests receive the confession of the sins on the ground of a special gift received by them from God. On the other hand, in bearing the sins as they would have been yours, it consists the forgiveness of those sins too.

362. The question of the same one: And if that thought persists in troubling me after the answer from the Fathers, why should I do?

The answer of John: That means that him who asked about that thought remained hasn't benefitted from the advice he has been given, because of not fulfilling that advice in cleanness. This is for God Who speaks through the saints He doesn't mistake[692].

363. The question of the same one: Should I ask the same Father for the second time about the same thing, or should I not? I know, Father, that sometimes I have been told not to do something, and I have asked for the second time about the same thing, and then I have been told to do the opposite. Why is that?

The answer of John: Brother, "the judgment od God are depth of sea" (Ps. 35: 6[693]). God put in the mouth of him who speaks a word fitting him who asks, either for testing him, or for his heart has got changed and he is found worthy of hearing something, either for other dealing with the same thing they change themselves, and God speaks for him through His saint in another manner. So, God spoke through Isaiah to King Hezekiah. After God told him: "prepare your businesses, for you are going to die", the king's heart got softened and he go sad. And for that God told him again through Isaih: "Behold, God added to your life fifteen more years" (Isa. 38: 1-5). If God had told him through somebody else, that thing would have offended him, because of seeing that the saints say different things. Likewise, God spoke to the Ninevite's heart through Jonah: "After three days I will destroy this city" (Jonah 3: 4). And when their heart changed towards repentance, God showed His great long-patience and he left the city for the city changed towards good. That's why one shouldn't change the saint he asks, but one should ask the same saint again, so that by

[692] You won't be able to get rid of an ugly thought if you do not fight that thought according to the advice of a spiritual father. This is the foundation of the confession of sins.

[693] In ROB we have" ps. 36: 6: "Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O Lord, thou preservest man and beast."; in ROB we have: Ps. 35: 6: "Your righteousness like the mountains of God, your judgments depth of sea; people and beats You will deliver, Lord." (E. l. t.'s n.)

occurring the need for God to change His answer God to do that through the same saint in order not to give birth to offence[694].

364. The question of the same one: Master, I have a cause with somebody and I needed to go to the judge. And I have taken the Fathers' opinion regarding that situation. And they told me what to do staring from that situation. And I think that I have done everything not to transgress their advices. But the solution hasn't bee according to their answer, so that I have been very tormented and knowing not what should I do. Should I cross over their advice? But I have been fearing the disobedience. Should I persevere in observing their advice? But I haven't been founding any solution by following that. Why should have done because of

[694] It is being deepened here the affirmation of some theologians that not God changes Himself when He reviews the condemnation, or the forgiveness of a man, but the man changes, like the son doesn't change when the man feel his helplessness to look at it, but the man's eye has changed because it has got sick. There was an answer that disregarded the Person-like character of God by affirming about Him that He was an impersonal nature. Actually, the Person-like character of God and God's report with the man as person it hides a deep and endlessly complex mystery. God has all sorts of possibilities to answer to the man, so that He can freely choose one possibility or another, by taking in account the multiple situations and the multiple changing modes of the man. And God doesn't limit Himself these possibilities, or He doesn't want any of these possibilities to be lost, because that would annul the man as free person, or, in other words, God wouldn't take the man seriously. God wants the man to love Him freely, but God let to the man also the possibility not to love God. God allows to Himself the latitude of hoping that the man will live Him, but God doesn't force the man to love Him. Otherwise, everything would have been rigid in the relationships between man and God. Otherwise, neither God nor the man would have been true persons. God accepts this kenosis (humbleness) or the possibility of hoping and of waiting for the love from the man, and of not forcing the man's love through an unconditional provision, because if that had been the case God wouldn't have created people whom to the cherished by Him as real persons, and whose fee love God to truly rejoice of. God can willingly renounce to some provision that would force the people to love Him, in order Him not to remain without that joy provided Him by an unforced love for Him from people. This non-forcing of the people's love doesn't disturb the order and the fulness of God's inward life. Neither the non-love shows Him by some people would disturb the happiness had by God within Himself out of the consummate love among the Trinitarian Persons. This non-forcing of the man's freedom by God, through an unconditional provision of the man's deeds, it was confirmed also by Saint John Damascene. This hides a willing dependency of the prescience of God of the man's freedom, that is a mysterious dependency, one difficult to be understood, because of being the dependency of an anterior science on posterior deeds. Maybe God looks at the man's deeds on a plan that exceeds the temporal succession, but without Him abolishing the temporal succession. Anyway, the report between the prescience of God and the man's freedom cannot be and it couldn't eventually be ever clarified by the human thinking.

reaching such a crossroads or need? I wonder if I have mistaken somehow and I haven't realized that?

The answer of John: The present answer is close to the previous answer. How? Take a listen to this. You have received an answer regarding how you should do something, and you have encountered opposition in doing it. In the first place, you must blame on yourself because your heart may have got sweetened with that thing and that's why you haven't surrendered yourself totally to God. And because of that too, God hasn't allowed the thing to be fulfilled according to the Fathers' advice. So, the cause has come from you, but you find them guilty for that. Elisha sent his disciple to resurrect a dead and the dead didn't resurrect (4 Kings[695] 4: 28-32). But the guilt was not of him who sent his disciple, but of the disciple who was sent. Otherwise, how comes that Elisha himself resurrected that dead? So, you owe to do whatever you can so that the things to be fulfilled according to the answer give to you by the Fathers. And if the things don't go as advised, you will know that there has occurred a change in one of the parts and that's why God has changed the things comprised in the give answer. For instance, somebody owes you ten coins and he doesn't have where to give you those coins back from. And you have asked a Father" "What should I ask from him?". And the Father told you" "As it is right: ten". The Oldman was announced to tell you that, namely you to not forgive anything to your debtor, for that debtor of yours was callous in his heart. But that debtor of yours, by hearing that you are going to ask him for the whole his debt, he repented and prayed to God, saying: "Master, I have no power to give back all the ten coins, so that please instill the judge not to force me to give back the whole sum and I will strive for the rest of my life to be pleasant to You". And the merciful God will change the judgment. But you won't know that. So, because him who you have asked is not nearby, you will pray God remembering the name of the Father whom you have asked for an answer to your problem, saying: "God of my spiritual father, don't allow me to deviate from Your will, neither from the answer given my by Your servant, but let me know what should I do". And you will do that what you will be announced to do, by believing that God spoke to you through

[695] In KJB this book is usually called as: 2 Kings. (E. l. t.'s n.)

His saint, but also God guides you now, by making you realize that there has occurred a change and that's why God has changed the content of the answer.

365. Question: Master, for how many times must I pray, for my thought to be announced about the change intervened to the previous answer?

Answer: When you cannot ask the Oldman, you must pray for three times for each thing. After doing so, you will take heed at towards what you heart tends, even for the least. And you will do that. This is for the announcement will be obvious and it will be doubtlessly known by your heart.

366. The question of the same one: How must I pray for three times: at diverse moments, or at the same time? This is for sometimes occur things which cannot be postponed.

The answer of John: If the time allows you, pray for three times on three different days. And if you are in a hurry, as in that hour which our Savior was caught in, and it is hard to endure, take Him as example. This is for, by being separated for three times, He told the same words (Mt. 26: 44). And even though He was not obeyed visibly, because the oikonomia (of the salvation) must have been fulfilled, He still teaches us by this in order us not to get sad and to pray even when we are not presently listened to. This is for He knows better than we do that what is useful to us. And let's not forsake the thankfulness[696].

367. The question of the same one: If the announcement is late to come after I have prayed, what should I do? And if I am the guilty one for that, but that is hidden from me, how could I realize what that is about?

[696] The threefold prayer shoes perseverance. That's why we say at the Holy Liturgy, in the persevering litany, for three times: "Lord, have mercy". But this makes us also realize that God is threefold in Persons, and therefore God is consummately loving of people. And even if our ask seemingly is not solved, we will thank God for He fulfills it in the best conditions for us.

Answer: if after the third prayer the announcement doesn't come to you, you will know that that is your fault. And if your mistake is not known by you, you will rebuke yourself, and so God will have mercy on you[697].

368. The question of the same one: What thoughts one should ask the Father about? Does he owe to fulfill the Fathers' answers, to all his questions, immediately?

The answer of John: Not all of them, but only those given him like commandments. This is for something else is the simple advice and something else is the commandment according to God. The advice is a commandment that doesn't oblige, but it only shows the man the right-path. But the commandment is like a non-rejectable yoke.

369. The question of the same one: You have showed me, Father, the difference between a commandment and the advice according to God. Tell me also the signs of each one of them. And how one knows them? And which is the benefit brought by each of them?

The answer of John: If you come at your initiative to a spiritual Father and you ask him about something, and not as one who wants to be given a commandment, but in order you to hear an answer according to God, and you will be told that what you should do, you will owe to keep in that case too that what you have been told. And even if you will be tested through that by a certain trouble, you most not get disturbed. This is for that is for your benefit. And if you do not want to fulfill that what you have been told, you won't reckon that you will have transgressed a commandment, but you will reckon that you will have overlooked something useful to you, and you will blame yourself for that. This is for he must reckon everything that comes out of the mouth of the saints as being towards the

[697] If we feel that God doesn't fulfill our ask in any way, not even differently from what we have asked for it like, we will know that that is because of our guilt that our ask hasn't entered to God through our prayer.

benefit of theirs who hear that. Likewise you should reckon if, even without you asking any question, some father tells you something by himself, for he is moved by some thought according to God, and sometimes in the past it had happened too. This is because, somebody among the Fathers wanted to enter a city and another Father told him: "If you enter the city, you will fall into fornication". And that one, not listening to what he was told, he entered and fell (Les sentences des Pères du désert, Solesmes, 1960, p. 80, no. 35).

And if you especially ask for a certain thing willing to be given a commandment, you have to prostrate before the Father and ask him for giving you a commandment. And after you have received that commandment, you will have to prostrate again in order him who has given you that commandment to bless you. So, you should tell him: bless me, Father, for the commandment that you have given to me, and pray for me in order I to keep it. This is for, know it from me brother, he who has given you a commandment he hasn't given you that commandment without containing a power, and he will also help your ask also by his own prayer so that you to be able to keep it[698]. And if because a kidnapping[699], you do not prostrate

[698] There is a subtle difference between advices and commandments which nuances the relationships among people, but it has a savior purpose between sons and fathers. It is not here only about the "evangelical advices" referring to the life of the monks. The advice doesn't require the man an unconditional surrender of his will, as the commandment does. If you do not listen to an advice, it sometimes will happen you to fall into mistakes, whose consequences you will suffer not because of not listening to and advice or to another, but because of the evil brought into your life by those mistakes. But transgressing the commandment will be reckoned in itself as disobedience. Even if by fulfilling a commandment you haven't reached a good result, the fact itself that you have fulfilled a commandment it will turn our unsuccess towards good. The commandment ties you on your spiritual father's person. You show him respect. The advice lets you rather within the frame of your will. That's why into commandment there is also o power coming to you from God through him who has given you that commandment, by the fact that he answers with fear and with trouble for the commandment which he gives you, in front of God. That's why he who asks somebody for a commandment, he also asks him for his prayer towards God for him to be able to fulfill that commandment. He who asks you for putting your will at his disposition, he asks that with the conscience that you put you will, through him, at the disposition of God. By that, he will commit himself, with tremble, to be held accountable for you in front of God, but only if you fulfill his commandment. That's why he prays God for you to be able to fulfill his commandment, for he is aware of the fact that your salvation depends of that. Or, he feels empowered to give strength to you too, so that you to be able to fulfill that commandment. And by that, the power will come to you both from God and from him who has given you that commandment to fulfill, through a mysterious encounter among God, the spiritual father, and

yourself in front of him, you won't reckon that that commandment is emptied of power, for that commandment has been strengthened through itself too[700], but you still have received that power without accomplishing the formal conditions in a strict manner. And if you can toil for fulfilling that commandment, it won't be necessary for you to turn back to that spiritual father and prostrate in front of him in order to ask for his blessing. And if you cannot toil and fulfill the commandment, you will reckon that you have received an that commandment with a lack.

370. Question: If I ask for receiving a commandment, but the Oldman doesn't give me a commandment on purpose, or if, on the opposite, I do not ask for a commandment but he gives me a commandment, will I reckon that as a commandment and mut I keep it?

The answer of John: If asked for, he purposely didn't give you a commandment, that won't be reckoned to you as a commandment even if you have asked for it. And if he reckoned to give you a commandment, even though you haven't asked for that as such, it still remain a commandment and you will have to keep it. But one must reckon as commandments also that what is written in the dogmatic canons[701], or the Fathers' answer given as decision. But for that, you should assure your thought by asking the Fathers. This is for you are not always sure of having the right meaning of the words. So, you must rather trust their answer and fulfill it without deviation, by the help of the loving of people God and with the prayers of the saints. Amen.

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you. This is for you surrender yourself to God together with your spiritual father, and God will give you power both directly and through your spiritual father.

[699] It is about a forgetfulness caused by the evil one through the temptation of another thought at that very moment.

[700] The conscience of him who gives you a commandment in the name of God, it will bring you power from God.

[701] In the Volos Edition, the editor thinks that there isn't about dogmas, but it is about the canons of the Synods, or of the Fathers.

371. The question of the same one: What will if do, if I have transgressed the commandment because of being tempted?

The answer of John: If you have transgressed a commandment received by you form the saints, you won't allow yourself to be troubled, neither will you despair so that you to no longer take heed at that commandment. This is for you should remember him who rightly said that "fall for seven times a day, and he rises up" (Prov. 24: 16), and remember our Lord Who told to Peter: "For seventy times seven you must forgive your brother" (Mt. 18: 22). So, if the people have received the commandment o forgive thus, how much more will Him forgive, for He is rich in mercy and He is supra-victorious upon all things by mercies[702]? He who shouts out, daily, through the prophet: "Turn back to Me and I will turn back to you. For I Ame merciful" (Joel 2: 13; Zac. 1: 3), and: "And now Israel" (The Second Law 10: 12). But take heed, lest by hearing that the commandment won't be abolished, you to get idle and to reach into indifference. This is for this thing will be a burden to you. And you mustn't despise the commandment even in the unimportant things. Even if it has happened to you to disregard these ones, you will strive to correct yourself. This is because out of such indifference somebody can reach into big mistakes.

372. The question of the same one: My thought whispers to me that I should not ask the saints lets, by receiving an answer and by disregarding than answer because of my weakness, I to mistake.

The answer of John: This thought is scary. Do not allow it. Actually, if somebody commits sin knowingly, he will condemn on himself. And if one mistakes because of his

[702] We are narrowed because of our pride; we are narrowed in our merci to forgive all the way to the end. God isn't limited by this narrowing. The man feels the need for self-affirmation by searching for a superiority. And the man does that often by reckoning another in inferiority, by cogitating at that one's weakness and mistakes. But God can give the man another superiority: it is that one towards the own superiority which the man is kept in by his conscience about his sin in front of God. God can make everyone, by forgiveness, to enjoy the broadness of His generosity and the freedom from the narrowing of their sins. God can make the people victorious over this narrowing, out of the power of the full freedom and out of the unlimited richness of His generosity.

nescience, he won't ever be condemned. But his passions will remain unhealed. That's why the devil instills this thought to somebody in order that one's passions to remain unhealed[703]. So, when your thought whispers to you that you cannot fulfill the answer because of your weakness, as the Father thus: "Tell me, Father, what is useful to me? This is because I know that if you tell me, I cannot keep that what you tell me. But I want to ask even only for despising myself that I overlooked what is beneficial to me". And by that you will at least gain your humbleness[704]. May the Lord guard your heart through the prayers of the saints. Amen.

373. The question of somebody else: Some other brother asked the same Oldman, saying: What is "the science with a liar name" (1 Tim. 6: 20)?

The answer of John: The "science with a liar name" consists of trusting your thought, regarding a certain thing. And if somebody wants to be delivered of that science with a liar name, let him not trust his thought but him to ask an Oldman. And if the Oldman answers him and the answer will be as the brother thought, neither then must the brother will trust his thought, but let him say: "The devils mocked me, in order I to trust my thought that I have the true knowledge, and by believing so, I to be carried by them into other fallings. And the Oldman told the truth for he speak from God and he is not the

[703] Under the willing nescience there is hidden a big cunningness. I do not ask about what I owed to avoid and about what I must fulfill, because of knowing that if I commit sins while now knowing what must I avoid of do, I won't be punished. And by doing so, I am, on one hand, tormented by the conscience of my sins, but on the other hand by that those will become difficult to be healed passions.

[704] It is better for you to know what you owe to do, even though you know that you won't be able to do that. But not keeping the commandment should be to you not because you disregard that commandment but because of your real helplessness. This is for, itself the torment for knowing what you should do but you cannot do that, it will be continuously humbling and it will maintain within you a continuous struggle for gradually ascending yourself above your helplessness. It is better the torment of the self-reproaching because of what you cannot do, than the insensitive indifference. In this too, there is a means for sensitization and humanization.

toy of the devils"[705]. I have told my brother as I has thought. But I do not know if it is so[706]. Pray for me.

374. The question of somebody else: Some other brother told to the same Oldman: When I am burdened by thoughts and I pray the Fathers to pray for me and I hear the things they tell to me, my soul gets immediately rested. How should I understand this?

The answer of John: When the ship reached to be the toy of the waves, if that ship has a helmsman, that one by the wisdom given him by God, he will escape that ship and the traveler will get gladdened by that escape. Likewise, reminding about his doctor will gladden not less the patient, especially the memory of the doctor's skillfulness. And he who is endangered in his travel, won't him be strengthened by hearing the voice of the guards and especially by seeing them? And if these things are so, how much more joy will produce the answer of the Fathers to anyone who hears it? And this will be especially when the answer is mixed with the perseverant prayer towards God Who said: "Pray one for another in order you to get healed" (Jas. 5: 16). And when they, by impropriating the illness of their limb, they shout out towards Jesus Who is their Master, saying with all sweet tears: "Master, have mercy on us because we are perishing" (Lk. 8: 24; Mt. 8: 25), how could this not bring joy him who hears that "much can the working prayer of the righteous" (Jas. 5: 16)? Let's therefore burden ourselves by calling them to pray for us. This is for even if we are worthless,

[705] Even if the Oldman confirms what I have felt, I haven't been right when I have reckoned that that thought has been born within me by myself. If I did that I would fall under the mockery of the devils. This is because, if I saw in the Oldman's confirmation of my thought, a strengthening of my opinion that that thought belonged to me, I would remain into deceit. Neither in this case must I remain slave to my pride. The Oldman wade right by presenting himself as speaking on behalf of God.

[706] This is the right position: when you tell your opinion to a brother, do not give that as surely expressing a truth, especially if you give that opinion as belonging to you. This is for only God know the truth. The idea that we know the truth by ourselves and from ourselves, it will place us in God's place, as springs of the truth. But only God is the spring of the truth, for God is the foundation of the entire reality, or in God there is comprised the entire reality. Only by being shared from Him we can know the truth. Putting ourselves in the place of God in this regard, it means no longer recognizing Him.

He takes the face of their servants, as He has even done it[707]. And He will do the will of everyone who fear Him" (Ps. 144: 19)[708].

Often, brother, when the thieves hear the answers and the voices of the strong ones, they run away. Likewise, when the spiritual thieves hear the answers and the voice of the stronger ones, of those who hear from their Master and Chieftain Jesus: "dare, for I have overcome the world" (Jn. 16: 33), and: "Behold, I have given you the power to step over snakes and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy and nothing will harm you" (Lk. 10: 19), the enemies run away with tremble, because of getting ashamed. Let's therefore ask the saints to pray for us and they will become familiar to us. And we will benefit much from them. So, pray for me in order I to do that as well, if the work of the one from the left doesn't get me into its mastery. The Lord be with you. Aamen.

375. Of the same one: For you told me once that both in the question about thoughts and in the question about the things themselves, there is good freedom, tell me what consists of the freedom of the question?

The answer of John: The freedom into thoughts consists of the fact that him who asks to fully unveil his thought to him whom he asks without hiding anything of that thought, neither to cover that thought up because of feeling ashamed, nor to

[707] Saint Cyril of Alexandria often said in *Worshipping in Ghost and in Truth* that the Father sees in the face of His Son our face, when we are united with the Son. Here is being said that, even being us worthless, the Son of God takes our faces. That's why He didn't unite Himself with a certain human person, but he took the human nature by and large, that one that is the nature of all of us, and which we are bearers to together with Him. He took our nature which He can feel in that what all of us feel, and each one of us feels. That's why He can pray for all of us, He could feel the sins of all of us, and He could suffer on the cross for each one of us. If we want, He will be able to wash all of us up, by taking Him our sins away from Us, and by communicating Him to all of us the human cleanness committed by Him especially through the Holy Impartation.

[708] We do the will of Christ when we attach ourselves to Him, and He does our true and sinless will, that one which we fight with against our alteration by sin, that one which we can restore our authentic nature. Saint Maximos the Confessor says that God wants that what is characteristic to our authentic nature, for He has created us having a will which we to resemble Him through (Opuscula theological et polemica; G.P. 91: 81). So, by doing us His will, we do that what He wants according to out true will. That's why, for that too, Christ has taken our will, of all of us.

present that thought as belonging to somebody else, btu to confess that thought as his and fully as it is. This is for the covering rather harms[709].

376. The question of the same one: Tell ma, Master, which is the freedom into things? And how must we use it?

The answer of John: The freedom in things is the truth said plainly and openly. Maybe somebody need food, or he needs a coat, or he needs generally some things, and he must say that to him who can given him that what ne heeds. But one must use this freedom only in front of a person who won't be offended by it. This is for not all the people are build up through it. He who has right-reckoning he will get built up and he will rejoice himself. But him who is not like so, he will get offended[710]. And he who uses this freedom, he must not use it in a passionate manner, namely in order to satisfy a passion that disturbs him, but only in order to satisfy a real need of his. So, when that person whom he asks freely don't get offended and neither there is a passion at the basis of his request, that freedom is good. One must also take heed at the fact that one should not use his freedom when there is present a person who could be easily offended by that. So, as much as possible, one needs to talk about what he asks rather in intimacy, only to him who can procure the needed thing and who can receive the ask of the brother without getting offended by it. This is because, sometimes, maybe being exhausted by tiredness, you

[709] The true freedom means to be free from yourself. It is the freedom of unveiling yourself into the whole your limitation and uncleanness. This is for only thus you can show that you have unveiled yourself as a subject beyond these false states, or you have unveiled your true self, and you have liberated yourself from that what has been dominating you, namely you have liberated yourself from that what you actually aren't. This is the true courage.

[710] The freedom from things (as from thoughts too) it is one with the non-hypocrisy, with the sincerity, but not with a cynical sincerity that is not united with a knowledge about the own true self, but with a humble one which you recognize through that you have some elementary needs as any other human being. This is also a liberation from the pride that tries to procure what it needs on meandrous and impure ways. Such a freedom can offend him who doesn't encounter it with understanding. This is because, if he addresses himself to one who is lacking the cleanness at his turn, that one can meet his ask with all sorts of dishonoring suppositions. He will get offended, while him who succeeds to meet in his sincerity him who is sincere too, he will get bulti up and he will rejoice of the freedom which him who need something from him asks him for that, for his true needs.

need to eat earlier and by hearing that somebody can get offended, or you ask for a thing and you brother won't get built up[711]. So, as it was said, good is that freedom ghat is used in the fear of God. This is because, if you need something but you do not tell that, and if you wait for somebody to give that thing to you by himself, it can happen that sometimes that person doesn't know about your need or, even if he knew about your need, he could forget about that, or he does that in order to test your patience, and by that you get offended by him and so you will commit sin. But if you tell him openly about your need, that things won't happen, but you must prepare your thought previously, so that if you do not receive what you have asked for, you won't get troubled, or you won't get offended, or you won't speak against. But you must tell to your thought: "Either him cannot give me that what I am asking for, or I am not worthy of receiving that and that's why God hasn't allowed him to give me that thing". And take heed, lest by seeing that that one hasn't fulfilled your ask, you will cut off your freedom towards him and so you won't dare any longer to ask him for something else. Guard yourself undisturbed by that unsuccess. And if somebody asks you at his own initiative about something that you need, then too you must tell him the truth. And even if you were kidnapped by some thought and you told him: "I don't need that", you should come into your senses and tell him: "Forgive me, because I haven't wanted to tell this. For I need that thing".

377. What should I do because my thought insists that this freedom of mine will cause offense to somebody?

The answer of John: You can test him if he gets offended or not. If you, for instant. Heed some food, do not tell him: "give me", but: "I am hungry because of that something". And that one, by hearing what you have said, he will unveil himself. And out of this you can find out what his tendency is: to get offended or not to.

[711] It is good to unveil a need only to him who can satisfy it and who can understand it, and not in front of a brother who is present but he in unable to hear that unveiled need without getting suspicious.

378. Question: The Great Oldman asked by brother John if he could pick up some fruits and eat, he allowed him to share what he was given, but without asking for that. Doesn't that seemingly stop the freedom?

The answer of John: His thought was whispering to brother John not to eat anything. But the Great Oldman, when asked, he told him that that though came him from the devils. And wanting him to shame up the devils, he said: "Do not have the initiative to ask and you will understand the enemy's evilness. This is for him who tell you not to eat anything, he will make you speak against if he gives you few foods or nothing at all". That's why he answered him by giving him this commandment: there where is not commandment, there will be your freedom beneficial to you[712].

379. Question towards the Great Oldman: A brother asked the Great Oldman, saying: I pray you, Master Abba, my soul is wounded and I have been always wanting to ask you about that, but I has been afraid to ask, thinking: "I won't ask for that in order I not to tempt the Ghost of the Lord". But Abba told me that is a big falling to the soul not to ask[713]. So, I pray you, for the Lord, pray for me and show me how can I be saved. And forgive me.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, you have got waken up a little too late, after your wounds have got stinky and rotten. If you want to be saved, you will cut off these deadly

[712] The decision to not eat anything it was unveiled as coming from the devil by the fact that him who decided not to eat anything he didn't ask from him who usually was giving him food, and so he spoke-against when that one gave him only a little food or he didn't give him anything. That's why Barsanuphius let him the freedom to eat when given something, but not to ask for food. That is a pride and a lack of sincerity saying one that he doesn't want to eat anything, but him to speak-against when given less food. It is better to him to renounce at that pride and lack of sincerity, by asking and by accepting that what is given to him, but without speaking-against that he is given too little, but being thankful for what he has been given. Through this is manifested the sincerity and the lack of pride, by striving himself to unite with those the thankfulness and not the speaking-against. But that he could manifest his freedom of his sincerity. Barsanuphius wants to liberate the soul of the addressee form the meandering paths, and to make that soul righteous and honest.

[713] Abba seems to be here the hegumen Serid.

wounds and you will tell together with David: "I am starting now" (Ps. 76: 10[714]). Son, starting from now, you must cut off all your wills and all your desires to justify yourself, and your disregard and your indifference, and in their place, you will keep the humbleness, the obedience, and the submission[715]. Reckon yourself as nothing in everything and you will be saved[716]. If you keep these, you will be guarded against all evil. And if not, you will see. This is for you will have to answer on the judgment day. This is because you are not only now condemned and held accountable, now when you are asking about them, but will be he so in the future too[717]. Therefore, you smut take heed at yourself so that you won't lose your reward, better said your time, by not taking care of your salvation[718], which is loved by God.

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[714] In KJB we have: Ps. 77: 10: "And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High."; in Rob we have: Ps. 76: 10: "And I said: Now I am starting to understand; this is the change of the right hand of the All-High." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[715] The own wills, the desire for justification, the despising of the duties, the indifference, they are forms of the self-locking, while the humbleness, the obedience, and the submission are the signs of the awareness that you are in a dialogue with God as partner Whom you totally depend on, but God as partner doesn't despise you, but God wants you to be aware of Him, and you to be awake in front of Him, and by that you will receive power out of God's power.

[716] You must reckon yourself as nothing, but not as a nothing outside any relationship. But you must reckon yourself into a relationship with Him Who is everything; you must reckon yourself as nothing by comparison to Him Whom you have your existence form, and Whom you can receive your eternal life from. You must reckon on yourself as nothing by being you aware of the relationship you have with the One Who is endless and eternal, from Whou you have received and you are receiving everything. The more you feel your being descended into nothingness, the more you wonder about the feeling of your nothingness, the more you will wonder about the fact that you still exist, and the more you will realize the infiniteness and the generosity of the power of Him Who can keep you and Who is keeping you into existence, though by yourself you are nothing. The intensity of living of God it is proportional with the intensity of feeling your nothingness. The infiniteness of the glory of God you will live it on the measure of your total nothingness, on the measure of your awareness of the fact that you can advance to the edge of the existence in living your nothingness, but still without you ceasing to exist, but not by yourself. He who deceitfully feels full of himself, he won't be aware of God. The term "wounded" from the question can be translated also as "full of himself": πεπεισμένη.

[717] I spoke in a previous footnote about the quality of the man as responsible being. The sensitiveness is one with the sentiment of the responsibility. He who is responsible in the present life, he will be held less accountable on that great day of the "answer". He who has answered here, he will be able to give "a good answer" to the "fearsome judgment". And he who hasn't been responsible here, he will be unwillingly answer then, for his deeds, and he won't be acquitted.

[718] "καιρός" it is not that time flowing without a purpose, but it is that time given for a unique purpose. The time of our earthly life it is the unique time appointed to our salvation.

380. The question of the same one towards the other Oldman: What does the cutting off of your own will mean?

The answer of John: This is a progress according to God. And cutting off your will means cutting off your will in the good things and you to do the will of the saints; and in the evil things it means throwing away from yourself the inappropriate things.

381. The question of the same one towards the same Oldman: When I ask about subtle thoughts my thought gets proud, as one who is able to notice all their subtleties.

Answer: If you want to ask some of the Fathers about subtle things and in the same time you want not to get haughty, you will remember that the man is required, in the first place, to correct yourself in his gross thoughts which have been forbidden by the Apostle, as, for instance; fornication, debauchery, envy, and similar thoughts. Then he is required not to despise his subtle thoughts. This is because him who occupies himself with the subtle thoughts, but he doesn't take care of his gross thoughts, he will be like that man who has a house dirty and full of all ugly things, and in the middle of that house he has some thin straws, and he wants to clean his house up and he starts firstly by getting those thin straws out, while he lets the boulders and the other things in, and he keeps stumbling on those[719]. If he removes only the straws his house wont' regain its beauty. But if he gets out the boulders and the other gross things, he won't be able to let inside either those straws, because they corrupt the house's beauty. That's why our Savior condemned the Pharisees and the Sadducee, by saying them: "Woe to you, because you give tithe of mint and of dill and of cumin but you have left the harder things of the law. You must to these and you must not leave those aside" (Mt. 23: 23).

[719] These are words which the spiritual father is asked about how him who asks about all kind of things he can clean himself up of his vain-glory, of his suspicions on others etc. but he is not asked about how can one get rid of his debauchery, or cheating on others, oof his greediness etc.

328. The question of the same one towards the same one: If somebody asks the same Oldman about something and the Oldman tells him that that thing will happen in a certain manner, but later on, because there will have occurred a certain difficulty and resistance concerning that thing, he who has asked about it will doubt the answer he will have received, will him be condemned as faithless?

Answer: If him who asked is a man who fight, he will correct his faithlessness by believing that the Holy Ghost doesn't lie when speaking thought the mouths of His saints, as He wishes. This is for it is said: "God spoke within His saint" (Ps. 59: 6[720]; 107: 8[721]). So, if he doesn't believe that God is the One Who speaks through the mouth of the asked one, he is unbeliever and he will be condemned from the beginning. But if he believed in the beginning and then after he started doubting, he can correct himself by hearing the Ecclesiastes who says: "For seven times a day the righteous falls and rises" (Prov. 24: 16). But again, we must take in account that for many times God said something in the godlike Scriptures about His servants, but something different than that happened to those. For instance, God said: "I will glorify them who glorify Me" (1 Kings[722] 2: 30). But we found some of the saints as living all the way to their death in reproached and in much rebuke. So, could we say that God didn't glorify them? But God glorified them abundantly, but they who do not see with the eyes of their heart they won't see the saints' glory. So, due to his patience, Job was more glorified, despite that in the human eyes of his friends he seemed to suffer all the things rightly coming upon him, but then he heard out of God's mouth: "Do you reckon that I behave to you such for something else than to show you as righteous?" (Job 40: 3). But also, the poor Lazarus, who was lingering at the

[720] In KJB we have: Ps. 60: 6: "God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth."; in ROB we have: Ps. 59: 6: "God spoke in His holy place: "I will rejoice Myself and I will divide Shechem and the Valley of Succoth I will measure." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[721] In KJB we have: Ps. 108: 7: "God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth."; in ROB we have: Ps. 107: 6: "Save me with Your right hand and hear me. God spoke in His holy place." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[722] In KJB this book is usually called as 1 Samuel. (E. l. t.'s n.)

gate of the rich man and who was much despised, he much glorified God by his patience[723]. And for I said that God glorified them who glorify Him, it seemed that to Lazarus was happening the opposite, because of remaining him in troubles all the way to his death. But later on, it was shows how God glorified Lazarus by placing him in Abraham's bosom (Lk. 46: 20-22).

And what can we tell about Saint Paul, he who was found worthy of seeing the Son of God Himself, and he was also found worthy of hearing the voice of God (1 Cor. 15: 8); and about Saint Paul God Himself testified that he is "vessel of the filling up" (Acts 9: 15) who was kidnapped to heavens and who heard the godlike voice and untold words which nobody heard (2 Cor. 12: 4)? And still, he was lowered for two times in a basket (Acts 9: 25; 2 Cor. 11: 33). Wasn't that to them who were unbelievers and lacking the right-reckoning and the discernment, a thing that could offend them? But still, the same Paul has been found worthy of the godlike grace. And that was done in order to prove many, in order to be seem if they remained in their faith into the Apostle. It happens so to the other saints towards the benefit of them who come as ask them questions.

But why should we speak about people while the Savior Himself prayed, saying: "Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from Me" (Mt. 26: 39)? By hearing that, the Apostles themselves got offended, because of not knowing that that was done according to oikonomia, towards the benefit of all people.

So, also the things happening now in another manner, they do not happen because of the weakness of the one who is asked, or of him who prays, but they take place for the proving and strengthening of the faith of them who come and ask them questions, in order to be seen if they remain strong in their faith. This is for they who remain in faith all the way to the very end of the things, they will see the glory of God coming to them.

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[723] About Job it is said that "he was glorified by God through patience". And about Lazarus it is said that "he was glorifying God through patience". Actually, him whom God gives sufferings to, he is being glorified by God, for God shows him able to glorify God by enduring the sufferings allowed by God upon than man. Being glorified by God and glorifying God coincide in this sense: "I glorify them who glorify Me". Not to mention here the glorification they will be granted in the future life for patiently suffering here. Right in the present patience of the believers there is a heroism of their ghost, which attracts upon them the glory from them who understand, a heroism which in the same time they extoll God through. Actually, in their patience there is present God too Who diminishes their sufferings. And within them it is felt this power from God Who is extolled through this power of enduring the sufferings, being them extolled at their turn, for the fact that can do that.

But some people who ask them hoping for the success of some bodily thing, and not for the benefit of their soul, they will quickly reach the success. But why not to rather look at Azaria and Anania, who trusted God that God could escape them from oven, they said to the emperor: "We have God in heavens Who can escape us from your hands and from the oven. And even if He doesn't do that, we won't worship your deities" (Dan. 3: 16-17). And God didn't glorify them immediately, but he let them until they were thrown into the oven. But when their consummate trust in God was shown to everybody, God delivered them, and so God left an example to them who are more hesitant in believing in God Who says: "And he who will endure to the very end, that one will be saved" (Mt. 10: 22).

Letting therefore everything to God Who know more than we do what is beneficial to us spiritually and bodily, let's not show ourselves without faith in the things said by Fathers, but let's patiently wait from God the good end and useful to the soul, reminding about the prophet who says: "His judgments are deep of sea" (Ps. 35: 7[724]). The fact that His judgments are impenetrable can bee seen also out of the things which happened to the Israelis. This is for, by hearing them that they followed to enter a land which milk and honey were following in, they tempted God much by their faithlessness, because of not reaching to such a land. They didn't understand that God called milk and honey the future spiritual goods, whom the law was only a shadow of, as the Apostle interpreted those to us (Col. 2: 17).

Therefore, over all of these, let's believe in our loving-of-people God and our Good Master Who always takes care of our life, more than we think and understand. For Him is due the glory, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, now and forever and ever. Amen.

383. The question of the same tone towards the same Oldman: Father, please clarify me the question: Hould I ask the Fathers about the fruits of my garden, whether those fruits are good; or if I have an enemy and I ask about Him, will him harm me; and they tell me about the fruits that they will be good and about my enemy that he won't harm me, but the fruits won't be

[724] Unidentified. (E. l. t.'s n.)

there and my enemy is searching for me to harm me, what should I believe? And if I find my thought weakening in faith because of the things that occurred contrary to their sayings, how must I strengthen and support my thought? Have mercy on me Father, this time too, and enlighten me the right path. And pray for my helplessness.

The answer of John: We must not reckon the words of the saints as lacking of power. Their words are working and uttered according to God. But because we are nailed into the bodily and material things, we cannot understand the sayings of the saints. This is for, as God takes care of the souls' salvation, so do the saints too. So, when the saints talk to us, let's understand that they speak about the inward man, and we will find out that the trouble coming to us from people, or the material loss, are towards our benefit. Thus[725], the foretelling about the good fructification has been fulfilled because not achieving the external fruits brought a benefit to the soul. So that that was good to us. And the prediction about the getting harmed by the enemy was fulfilled as well, for the enmity become a cause for souly benefit, if we endure it with thankfulness, by remembering him who said: "Give thanks in everything" (1 Thes. 5: 10) and: "Pray for your enemies and for them who trouble you" (Lk. 6: 28) and: "Blessed will you be when they rebuke you and persecute you" (Mt. 5: 11). This is for, if we are righteous, the trial from the enemy will become a cause for progress to us, and fi we are sinners that will bring us the forgiveness of our sins and the correction, in order us to get accustomed and to learn the patience[726].

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[725] All the things of the man or of the human collectivities have a history. Some of them start well but then they cross through more difficult stages, or vice versa. The difficult stages must not determine the people whom they are happening with, to get discouraged, but they must believe that God will get out of those difficulties on them who believe in Him, to a good final. By doing so, they will see appearing to them the glory of God. The history of the persona and collective life has among other purposes also the purpose of strengthening the people into faith, in order they not to allow themselves to be discouraged by the difficulties and unsuccess occurring on the way.

[726] The things which are unpleasant to us on the plan of the bodily life, they are useful to our soul. That's why the Oldman who was asked about the unshown fruits of the trials of some people, he was right to tell that those fruits will show up, even if those fruits didn't show up, for even though they didn't show up on a seen plan, they were produced on an unseen plan. And about getting harmed by the enemy, the Oldman was right to tell that it won't take place,

And if it happens to us to rejoice even in the bodily things, either of earnings, or of peace, let's understand that these ones are beneficial to our inward man. This is for the benefit of our inward man has been working the prayer of the righteous.

Being those things so, the hater of the faith cannot break our faith. This is for out of both of them can be born the things useful to our inward man. This is for also in the peace gained by somebody there is the fulfillment of the saints' prediction, for it was foretold towards benefit. May the Lord make you wise and enlighten your heart.

384. The question of the same one towards the same one: If I ask the saints to pray for an illness of my soul and of my body and I believe that the healing will immediately come to me, will it that be so? Even though it wouldn't be beneficial to me if I was immediately healed up?

The answer of John: It is not good for you to pray starting from yourself, in order you to be healed of an illness, because you do not know what is useful to you. But you must let that to Him Who said: "Your Heavenly Father knows the things you need before you asking Him for those" (Mt. 6: 8). Therefore, you smut pray to God saying so: "Master, I am in Your hands, have mercy on me according to Your will and, if it will be beneficial to me, please heal me up quickly". You must pray the saints for they to ask from God for the same thing, and you must believe without you doubting, that God will do that what is beneficial to you. And you must thank God in everything, by remembering the word: "give thanks in everything' (1 Thes. 5: 18). And you will benefit with your soul and with your body.

385. The question of the same one towards the same one: What do the Fathers ask for when they are asked to pray for some temptation? Do they ask for deliverance of than illness, or for that what is beneficial? And why Abba Sisoes asked from God for the deliverance of passion for his disciple, like other

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even if a temptation came from the enemy. This is for that temptation was beneficial to the soul.

Fathers did too (Paterikon, Sisoes: 12)? And how must we understand the word: "Him who believes all the things are possible to" (Mt. 9: 23)? And again, how must we understand the saying that nobody is tempted more than he can endure? And it is the trial towards benefit? And are the prayers of the saints useful?

The answer of John: Brother, because both I and you are impatient, we let aside our passions and we ask about other things instead. Still, about the things you asked me, I reckon the followings: The consummate Fathers pray to God for God to do that what is beneficial to the man. So, it the illness is beneficial to the man, God will allow that illness upon the man in order the man to acquire patience. And if it is useful to the man to be delivered from that illness, God will deliver that man. And we attribute this to the prescience of God. So, Abba Sisoes prayed for his disciple being announced that he must pray. Likewise, the other Oldman, of better said all the other Fathers, they pray on the ground of being them announced to pray. And it is obvious that we must reckon the things happening to the man as happening for man's benefit. This is for the Apostle says: "gives thanks in everything" (1 Thes. 5: 18). Likewise, to him who believes all the things are possible, either to endure the trouble of the illnesses with trust, or to endure, or to have long-patience, or to bear everything manly, as Job did. And the man doesn't text the man above the man's power. If the prayers of the saints do not come to his help, the man will become impatient because of his weakness. May God forgive your much-speaking, brother.

386. The question of the same one towards the same one: I happen to me when the saints are near to me, I to walk a road full of thieves, either because a need of mine or for some other thing of the faith or in order to go and visit some Fathers. Tell me, Abba, how should I walk that road? Will I walk that road without worrying and by believing in the power of the saints? Or in what manner? And if I suddenly arrived among thieves, what would I thing? Namely, only about me, or about the people with me too, or even about the things I carry? And if it happened that Abba was not told about those thieves, would I turn back to him and tell him?

The answer of John: If we have reached to have the saints near to us, we must fully trust that we will have the help of God in all the things. This is for, if in the things of the world, if one surrenders his house to one of the powerful men, that powerful man will take a good care of that house due to the honor of receiving that house in his care, all the more will be consummated by God the help provided by the saints to him who has surrendered himself to them[727]. This is for it is said about God that "He will do the will of them who fear Him; He will listen to their prayer and He will save them" (Ps. 144: 19[728]). So, we must try in all ways to have the consummate closeness of the saints to us, towards the help and the salvation of our soul. And if while we have the saints near to us, there occur troubles and difficulties in our businesses, of if we fall on our way, let's not lose our courage and let's not reckon them who are close to us as helpless and to we to get offended by them, by the fact that after they have joined us there occurred also a material loss to us, or some blow onto our body. But let's remember that also the godlike Apostle despite he was powerful and consummate and Saint, he fell in all of these and he praised on himself, saying: "I endured many dangers, but the Lord delivered me from all of them" (2 Tim. 3: 11). This is for it was said that "many are the troubled or the righteous and the Lord delivers them from all their troubles" (Ps. 33: 18[729]); and

[727] According to Barsanuphius and John, the saints have a great role in our lives. The saints stay beside us, helping us, and praying for us. Being the saints full of the power of God, that power irradiates out of them within us too. The saints determine sus to open ourselves to God. The saints "surrender" us to God. And that's why the care of the saints for helping us it is strengthened also by the power of God, that power that is within the saints. A saint doesn't stay alone in front of God. His love for others doesn't allow him not to take care of those whom he loves. And by keeping him tied to those whom he loves, together with them there is God as well, due to the saints' love for us, and that makes even stronger the help provided us from the saints. The Orthodox Church hasn't fallen into the Protestant individualism, that is a fruit of the Renaissance, of the pride of the individual promoted by that, and individualism that has weakened the Church and it has removed the connection from among the people on earth together with the saints.

[728] In KJB we have: Ps. 145: 19: "He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them."; in ROB we have: Ps. 144: 19: "The will of them who fear Him He will do it, and their prayer He will hear it and All the sinners He will destroy." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[729] In ROB we have: Ps. 34: 19: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."; in ROB we have: Ps. 33: 18: "Many are the troubles of the righteous and out of all of those will they be delivered by God." (E. l. t.'s n.)

that “through many troubles we must enter the Kingdom of Heavens” (Acts 14: 22); and again: “A non-tempted man is unproven and inexperienced” (Resch, Agrapha, no. 90, p. 130, pp. 130-132). Let’s bear in mind that no good thing can be made without trouble. This is because it stirs up the devil’s envy[730]. And if it happened to us to advance into good without experiencing troubles, we must not get haughty by thinking that we have been delivered from trouble due to our worthiness, but we must think that God Who knows our weakness, of the fact that we haven’t the power for enduring the trouble, He has covered up through the closeness (assistance) of the saints. This is for it was written about them who endure in troubled and in trials: “Blessed is him who endures the temptation , for by becoming proven he will take the crown of the life” (Jas. 1: 12)[731]. Take heed lest by trusting the fact that you have the saints close to you (fighting for you), to walk your road carelessly. And if you hear something while walking your road, either about thieves of about something else (dangerous), you must strengthen yourself and you smut do whatever you can not to fall into those things, but in the same time you must pray God, and you must thing at the closeness of the saints, but you still must take heed at doing your travel either together with

[730] It is a current experience that each time one does something good, that will stir up an envy, a gossip, or even an impediment. All the more, the deeds that are especially good, or the people who have dedicated themselves to the good in a special manner. But all of these bring praises as well. And the envy is stirred up by those praises. But the cause may consist also of the fact that the people do not like to stay in the shadow while others shine. That’s’ why, maybe the praised ones are also guilty of not granting enough attention to them who are less endowed. That’s why they who are praised need to be humble. Theya re required some sort of covering of their good deeds, united with the avoidance of the vain-glory, and that will be beneficial to them too. But they are also required to pay more attention to other too. That would prove an even greater quality of theirs. In the end, all the people have value. All the people are brothers. The envy is at its turn put in the serving of a balance, when they who do great deeds do not shun from vain-glory. But this doesn’t mean that there aren’t also cases of envy that cannot he healed despite the sincere humbleness of them who did the good deeds, or that there aren’t unseen evil subject whom the envy stuck on forever, and whom the envy has not the mentioned motivation. There are also being s who stir up the envy within people.

[731] The crown, the glory, the reward, they won’t be added externally to the man who has been striving, but they will be spread out of the spiritual strength gained by that man, though in that strength there is also present the power of God. This is an “experienced” man, a “proven” man, through the trial isn’t only something that exists within that man and that has come out by him enduring the trials, but it has been also produced by that man’s patience. The crowned ones are soldiers who have become powerful during the spiritual wars, they becoming resemblant to their strong emperor through their steadfast will into good.

other people, or by asking how could you travel safely, while alone, on a road or another[732].

Even though you want to travel a road for having a motif a rightly-believing duty or to visit some Fathers, if you heard about thieves or other dangers related to that road, you wouldn't daringly start walking that road without any assurance, in order you to get rid, though that too, of pride and of danger. This is because one mustn't throw himself willingly into trial, but one must only endure the trial with thankfulness as coming from the lenience of God[733]. This is for find out about some of the saints as well, by wanting to go and visit some other saints who lived further away in the desert, and because they heard about thieves and other possible troubles, they postponed their travel. This is an example of humbleness for us. So, if you heard about the road which you are walking on, that that is intertwined with troubles, strive yourself to ask Abba, saying: "What do you reckon that I should do?". And you must to whatever he told you to do. And if because of your forgetfulness you haven't told Abba and you have accepted a task to fulfill, and on the road, you remember that you should have asked Abba, you won't need to turn back, but you will pray to God, saying: "Master, forgive me and forgive my carelessness. And by the help of the saints and by the kindness of Your mercy, please guide me according to Your will. And please save me and guard

[732] We must put into the committing of the good, into the rejection of the sin, the whole our power, as the success would depend on our power; btu we must also ask for the help from God and from the saints, as our success would depend on that help. Actually, we need both kinds of help. We cannot do anything good without our effort and neither without the help from God. This is our co-working with God. Neither we can se our power in work without the power from God. But neither the power from God brings forth fruits without rooting into the soil of our being. Even in our effort there is active the power of God too.

[733] Someone's throwing into trials while trusting that God will uphold him due to his faith, it is at its turn a sort of pride that it not pleasant to God, and such a deed can destroy that somebody. It is like he would force God to help him, by reckoning his power as stronger that God's will. Only when there is an absolute need for receiving a trial, that trial must be received with humbleness and by asking for the help from God; or, only when the trials come onto you without having you previously searched for it, and without being you able to avoid it in a manner unpleasant to God and inappropriate to your spiritual growth, only than one must receive the trial. The humbleness and the dignity, or the devotion for a value necessary to a true life, they must go hand in hand. Then you will receive your trials by thanking God for the strut He shows you, by Him allowing that trial coming upon you because He knows that you will be able to overcome that trial. Here too, God must be transparent to you, His light penetrating through the wall of some aspect of your egotism.

me against any evil and cunning thing. For Your name has been glorified forever. Amen".

387. The question of the same one towards the same Oldman: Can the faith of somebody be beneficial to another who doesn't bring his faith too, as it was beneficial to the man with palsy the fait of them who bore him (Mk. 2: 3-5)?

Answer: If the man with palsy was had not been a believer himself, he wouldn't have allowed them to carry him and to lower him through the roof. So, his faith united with the faith of the others it saved him. Consequently, if the man doesn't add also his faith in God, he won't find benefit. So, you must not give as motif the fact that you have placed the whole your burden upon somebody else. Jeremiah, by believing that God will save the people, he also prayed for the people. But because of the people didn't believe, he wasn't listened to (Jer. 11: 14). Hadn't Jeremiah had faith? Yes, he had had faith. His faith was like the faith of those who carried the man with palsy. Therefore, the guilt belonged to the people. It is likewise in the similar cases too. This is fore it wasn't said for nothing: "Much can the working prayer of the righteous" (Mt. 5: 16).

388. The question of the same one towards the same one: I pray you, Father, tell me what consisted of the together-working of the daughter of the Canaanite woman (Mt. 15: 21-28), or of the servant of the centurion (Lk. 7: 2), so that they were healed? And the similar question regarding the man with palsy who asked for the healing of his body and he firstly received the forgiveness of his sins? What consisted here the together-working of? ON the other hand, our Lord says to Apostles: "Anything you will untie on earth, it will be untied on heavens too" (Mt. 18: 18), and: "Whom you will forgive his sing to, his sins forgiven will be" (Jn. 20: 23). He didn't say: "If they will collaborate". Please clarify me this.

Answer: Brother, they who do not understand how the things are, they will be bewildered. The daughter of the Canaanite woman and the servant of the centurion they lost the self-awareness, the first one because of the devilish insanity,

and the second one because of his helplessness. Therefore, they were unable to add their together-working to that of those who prayed for them. And the man with palsy by adding his faith into the healing of his body, he has been found worthy for more, by the love for people of our Master.

This is for our Savior, in order the people to believe that He came, He did miracles in the beginning, without a together-working of theirs, and he healed the people as a gift (for free), in order the prophetic word to be fulfilled: "This One our weaknesses He took and our illnesses He bore" (Isa. 53: 4). Being accountable for their sins, the people were being healed by His grace, while not being a co-working required from them[734], but they were required only to guard themselves after having been cleaned, as He says: "Behold, you have been healed; from now on do not commit sin, lest something worse to happen to you" (Jn. 5: 14). But also, John says about Him: "Behold, the Lamb of God, He Who removed the sins of the world" (Jn. 1: 29). Take heed at what he says: "of the whole world". Still, they who didn't accept him they didn't receive healing, but with them was fulfilled the word: "And if the unbeliever separates himself, let him separate" (1 Cor. 7: 15). And if He gave the Apostles power to heal and to forgive the sins of them who collaborate with their prayer[735], may you be convinced by James himself who has received this power. This is for he says: "Much can the prayer of the righteous made

[734] By inheriting the sinfulness of their proto-parents, the people in a certain sense non-accountable (ανεύθυνος) for their sins before they had received the grace of Christ through baptism. That's why too, they weren't required their collaboration for their sins to be forgiven, because they were unable to. Of course, reckoning them as non-accountable did not equaled a receiving of them into the Kingdom of Heavens. That was to come only through Christ.

[735] Jesus didn't heal people by praying, for He was God when healing too, so that he worked like God. But when he prayed, He did that like a man, and therefore while doing that He didn't heal people. But the Apostles were healing also while praying, for they worked in that healing as men. And therefore, they who were healed by Apostles they must collaborate too, by praying themselves to be healed. The strong and the weak people must show themselves to God as intertwined, in order the power of God who is overpoured within those who are more open to that power, to cross also within them whom they want to united themselves with, out of their love and by the kinship of the nature. Through the lit charcoal the godlike fire passes also to the non-lit charcoal that is in contact with the lit charcoal. Him who has his soul with palsy, he cannot go to Christ by himself, but he wants to be helped to reach in front of Christ; the strengthening word of him who is stronger in his faith, it is of great help to him; by that, he will be helped to feel the power of Christ, or he will be elevated to that state that allows him to feel Christ's power.

working" (Jas. 5: 16). This is for the prayer of the Apostles and of the saints it is a prayer that has been made working[736]. But it didn't happen likewise in the case of our Savior. But as many as accepted Him, they were saved and healed. And they who didn't accept Him, they were lost. Let's therefore strengthen ourselves into faith, and we will be saved in the name of God Whom it is due the glory forever. Amen.

389. The question of the same one: I pray you, Master, teach me what was the guilt of the disciple of Saint Elisha, so that he was unable to resurrect that death? And why the prophet still had sent him in advance if he knew about that, and why the prophet hadn't corrected his disciple before sending him?

Answer: Did Elisha send his disciple despising him? Or course not. But he sent his disciple in order to teach him that it is not good to despise somebody when bringing him to repentance, in order him to believe and to resurrect others too. But the disciple remained as he was. And because of his faithlessness, he wasn't able to resurrect the dead, but he still sent him in order to lack any defense for he was drawn hi attention but he didn't understand. Likewise, our Lord knew that Judah was a traitor but He didn't' despise Judah to His last breath, but He draw Judah's attention and He didn't removed Judah from Himself, until that one had been totally lost[737]. This is for the people are free. And in order to be shown

[736] According to the French translator, this sentence has the meaning that the Old John, by always accentuating, as Barsanuphius did too, the communion between persons, he reckoned that the prayer of the righteous is made working, or it is upheld through him who that prayer is done for. Therefore, the las one too, he must be active. But one must also reckon that in this communion the prayer is made working by God as well.

[737] If Jesus had shown any harshness to Judah, Judah could have been moved to commit his ugly deed also by some word or deed of Jesus, which Judah could have been seen some evilness. Then, one could have said that God is evil too, or God is a cause of the evil. But Judah wasn't pushed to anything evil from Jesus's part. By and large, the man isn't forced to evil by God's power. But the man decides himself for evil totally freely. Or, the people are moved to evil by one another, without being forced to that by a force which to annul their freedom. That's why they won't be able to blame God for the evil done by themselves, at the final judgment. Only the people will be accountable. But the people will accuse on one another, because of having pushed one another to evil, or because they were role-model for evil to one another. But that won't unburden any of them of the evil accepted from others, though some people will be shown as having been eviler than others. The better one is, the stronger he proved to be against that what can enslave him, and therefore he will be closer to

that not God is the cause of the evils, neither are the saints, but the people are the causes of their own evils, so that they have been granted their freedom in order to be defenseless on the day of the judgment, when they will accuse one another[738].

390. Question towards the Great Oldman: Some inhabitants of the monastery, being delivered from many temptations by the prayers of the Holy Fathers, when hearing about the coming of some thieves, they wanted to leave that monastery and they asked the Great Oldman about that.

The answer of Barsanuphius: We have been imparted with the feeling of the work of the Master and of-people-loving God Who has delivered us from all troubles. Therefore, let's not doubt either now that He will deliver us form and He will defend us against any evil. Therefore, let's throw upon Him the whole our worry (1 Pt. 5: 7), and all our hope. And wherever you are, do not be afraid of any evil, by the prayers of the saints. Stand strong in the faith into Christ, singing together with Prophet David: "The Lord is my help and I won't fear that what the man can do to me" (Ps. 17: 6[739]); and: "May the Lord guard you against all evil, may the Lord guard you soul: May the Lord guard you entrance and your exit from now and forever" (Ps. 120: 7-8[740]). Take heed at not seeing the people that you have God but you fear the people. "Even if I walked in the middle of the shadow of the death, I wouldn't fear of evils, for You are

God or fuller of God's power. God's transcendence is one with His full kindness and freedom. And as the kindness always belongs to somebody, God is the Person-like Subject Whose freedom cannot fall prey to evil or to that what isn't truly good.

[738] If not the freedom of the people had been the cause of their sins, it wouldn't have been just the people to be judged. Even in the fact that the people accuse on one another, they show themselves as being aware of the freedom had by each one of them who accuse on one another.

[739] In KJB we have: Ps. 18: 5: "The sorrows of hell compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me."; in ROB we have: Ps. 17: 6: "The pains of the hell surrounded me; the snares of the death met me." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[740] In KJB we have: Ps. 121: 7-8: "The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. // The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore."; in ROB we have: Ps. 120: 7-8: "The Lord will guard you against all evil; He will guard your soul. // The Lord will guard your entrance and you exit from now on and forever." (E. l. t.'s n.)

with me" (Ps. 22: 4[741]). Tell to that soul who doubts, to have courage. The Lordc of the power is with us, our help if the God of Jacob. We are embracing all of you into the Lord Who says: "It's Me, do not fear" (Mt. 14: 27).

391. Question towards the same one: A certain brother who heard this answer, he told to the same Gret Oldman: I pray you, if somebody had this trust, should him live fearlessly even in a place haunted by thieves?

The answer of Barsanuphius: We must always trust Jesus that he doesn't allow us to be tried above our power (1 Cor. 10: 13). But for He taught us, saying: "Pray, not to fall into temptation" (Mt. 26: 41), we must not throw ourselves into temptation. This is because that would be a transgression of the commandment of God, because of surrendering ourselves to death. But we must guard ourselves. But if we live in a peaceful place and we hear about a coming closer of the thieves, we must not get disturbed, for we know that we have God as our cover. This is for God sees that we haven't thrown ourselves into trial, neither we have transgressed His commandment, but we rather guard His commandment, shouting us out day and night: "And don't bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the cunning one" (Mt. 6: 13). So, if we pray like that but a trial comes upon us, or an invasion of the thieves, let's not lose our courage, for that is allowed by God to happen, in order to prove us and towards our benefit. And if that is allowed by God to happen, let's trust the Apostle's word that says: "faithful is God Who won't let us to be tried above that what we can, but in the same time with the temptation god will bring us the escape too, so that we will be able to endure it" (1 Cor. 10: 13). Actually, if by simply hearing we run away to some other place, the devil will be able not to allow us settle down anywhere. So, when we know surely about a place that is intertwined with dangers, we must guard ourselves in advance, but when a place is peaceful, but unexpectedly a trial comes there, God sees that the cause of that is not from us and he will protect us according to His will.

[741] In KJB we have: Ps. 23: 4: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me;"; in ROB we have: Ps. 22: 4: "For even if I walked in the middle of the death, I won't fear the evils; for You are with me." (E. l. t.'s n.)

This is for that is a temptation from us and God allows it. About that said Apostle James: "Anybody, being tempted, not to say: I am tempted from God. This is for God cannot be tempted by evils" (Jas. 1: 13). But him who is tempted with God's permission, he is tempted for his soul to benefit[742]. This is for the temptations happen to the man in order the man to be proven and "the being proven leads the man to trust. And the trust doesn't shame", as it was written (Rom. 5: 4)[743]. And he who is not shamed up, he will be saved by Christ Jesus our Lord Whom it is due the glory forever. Amen.

392. The question of the same one towards the same one: "Test me, Lord, and tempt me" (Ps. 25: 2[744]); and again: "Rejoice when you reach in diverse temptations" (Jas. 1: 2). But some other time it was said: "And lead us not into temptations" (Mt. 6: 13); and again; "Pray, for you not to enter the temptations" (Mt. 26: 41). But these ones are contrary to one another. Please show me the discernment of the temptations.

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[742] In order somebody to temp another to an evil thing, he must himself be tempted by evil, because he pleads for that evil, or he shows himself as in love with that evil. But God is above any evil. This is one aspect of God's transcendence: God cannot feel in Himself the temptation of any evil, namely God cannot feel that He could fall under the inferior power of the evil, or that God could slide away from His absolute power and freedom. This is for the evil represents the domination of somebody by something that is inferior to him, and it represent the taking under mastery of his freedom by that inferior something, and therefore it is a weakness. But God allow the created being to tempt on one another, or He allows the beings to be tempted by things, or the creatures to allow their freedom to be take into mastery by the inferior force of the evil. And God can allow this due to the freedom which God endowed these creatures with, because the creatures can renounce, more or less, to their freedom too. God has given the man the freedom tied to man's being, and the man's freedom itself is allowed to grow up, and the man's being as well, towards consummation or towards the union with God. God allowed to the man too his dignity to keep himself into liberty, to strengthen himself into liberty. The man can say; "I am free when I want to be free". But the man can be free by his will of being free and as a gift tied to man's being (ontologically). The freedom is both a gift and the result of man's work. That's why, at any moment during his earthly life, the man can lose or he can gain his freedom, but, because the absolute freedom belongs only to God, the created beings do not have the absolute freedom, neither they can have it or keep it or regain it except in union with God.

[743] He who is not strengthened into freedom through the trials which he is submitted to, he cannot hope that he will be member of the Kingdom of the free sons of God. But he who has reached this trust by being tested, this trust won't shame him up.

[744] In KJB we have: Ps. 26: 2: "Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart."; in ROB we have: Ps. 25: 2: "Examine me, Lord, and try me; ignite my entrails and my heart." (E. l. t.'s n.)

The answer of Barsanuphius: The word: "Test me, Lord, and tempt me" it belongs to that man who fights and who asks for being tempted through the temptation coming upon him with the permission of God. But he says that word thinking to endure the trouble of the trial. This is for the patience, as it was said, it leads the man to be proven and to the other goods (Rom. 5: 4). From here spring out, in a certain manner, the joy and the progress. This is for the will of him who fight, it doesn't collaborate with the temptations but it rather fights the temptations, and the man surrenders himself to tiredness in order him not to be defeated by temptation.

And the word: "Do not lead us into temptation" means: Not to let us be tempted by our will and by our lust. This is because out of such a temptation it will be born the death. That's why the Savior tells us: "Pray, for you not to fall into temptation" (Mt. 26: 13).

That's why the righteous one asks for both: on one hand he asks for being tempted with the permission of God in order him to be proven for salvation; on the other hand, he asks not to be tempted by his will and by his lust towards losing his soul.

393. The question of the same one: How can I have the fear of God steadfast within my callous heart? Then, when I do something, even before finishing that thing, I move my mind to something else, motivating that I do that, seemingly, for the fear of God. Is it that good, or it isn't?

Answer: If one wants to always have his fear of God steadfastly within his heart, he can learn out of this example: When somebody wants to travel, he put footwear in his feet. This is for the Scripture says: "the footwear is the sign of the preparation" (Eph. 6: 14). In addition to that it was written: "I was ready and I didn't get disturbed? (Ps. 118: 60[745]). Therefore, when somebody knows that he has to do something, he must understand through the bodily preparation the spiritual

[745] In KJB we have: Ps. 119: 60: "I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments."; in Rob we have: Ps. 118: 60: "I was ready and I didn't get disturbed from keeping your commandments." (E. l. t.'s n.)

preparation, and he must put on his spiritual footwear, namely the preparation through the fear of God, and he must cogitate that he ought to do everything in the fear of God, and that he must prepare his heart to call upon God so that God to bestow him His fear. This is for, by putting himself this fear in front of his eyes, in everything he does, this fear will become steadfast to him[746].

But we must take heed at not to move our mind from the present thing to another thing, by invoking as reason the fear of God. This is for this is not God's straight path, but this is a scattering and a deceit from the enemy. And we must force ourselves to have the fear of God within us, in all important things.

But we also must get attached also to the saints, and out of their opinions, out of their speaking, out of their sight, and out of their beautiful life, we to get filled up with that repentance according to God. This is similar to the sheep of Jacob, which by guarding the twigs from the water, they conceived and gave birth to lambs according to the mottled twigs (Gen. 30: 37-40). Thus, if we imprint their examples within us, in order us to benefit of the same things, we won't be late in walking the same path together with them.

394. The question of the same one towards the same one: I often remember the fear of God and immediately, by thinking at judgment, I feel myself engulfed by repentance. What should I receive like, this memory?

Answer: Anytime when it comes to you the memory or the pricking of your heart for your knowing and unknowing mistakes, take heed not to come that to you out of the work of

[746] The fear of God is like a footwear helping the man to always stepping on the path wanted by God. Only if the man is ceaselessly helped by the fear of God, the man will step on this path without deviating or stopping. He who has steadfast within himself this fear, he won't pass from a thing to another, he won't leave the right path of God, he won't fall prey to the thoughts' scattering. The fear of God has been imprinted within himself like a luminous source of light that won't ever be quenched, and that is being upheld not only by the man, but the man will be in a continuous collaboration with God. Better said, the fear of God is like a nail ceaselessly piecing our being, and without causing an illness to us, but rather providing us with a steadfastness into health, by uniting our being with God and by making God felt by being the man ceaseless pricked by God's fear. It might be that the reason why the fear of God is said as being as its effect "the pricking of the heart" (Acts 2: 37).

the devil, towards an even bigger damnation. And if you ask me: what could I discern like, between the true one and the one coming out of devilish work, listen to this: when such a memory comes to you, and you strive to correct yourself through your deeds, that is the true one and through it your sing will be forgiven; but when you see that, by being you pricked by memory, you still fall into the same sins, or into even bigger temptations, you know that that is a memory brought you by the enemy which he throws it to you towards the damnation of your soul[747]. Behold, both ways are not clear. If you fear your damnation, you will run away from its deeds.

395. The question of the same one: When is it the time right for you to remember God and His fear, in order those memories to prick your heart for your sins?

Answer: The fire has a hot nature and he who wants to use it he doesn't always ignite it. But he wants to keep the fire hidden, in order him to ignite the fire and him to use the fire whenever he wants to get warm. We ought to do likewise here too. But the urges form the devil enter and are sown at inappropriate time, by taking the image of the fear of God, but with the desire to throw somebody into sadness or to disturb his mind, so that he won't occupy himself with examining his thought, invoking as reason the work staying in front of him. This is because if the enemy doesn't find them occupied with other things, he won't be able to take them into his mastery. So, you must remember the Ecclesiastes who says: "There is a time for everything" (Eccl. 3: 1). And say to yourself: I am going to do, for now, that what stays in front of me, with the fear of God, and then I will occupy myself with the thought that has come to me now, but not with my wisdom, but with the power from God Who examines our hearts and the entrails.

Let the appropriate time for that to be for you: the morning and the evening for examining your thoughts, by looking at what the night and the day have past like. And if you

[747] When the memory of the in leads you to repentance, it is from God. When it leads you to repeating your sin, it is from the devil.

see some mistake, you will strive to correct that by the help of Christ[748].

396. The question of the same one: Often the forgetfulness that come to me, it weakens the memory of many of my mistakes. And sometimes their memory totally vanishes. What should I do?

The answer of Barsanuphius: There are some illiterate people who, based on some agreements, they borrowed some things belonging to some honest people. But the honest people by being animated by their faith into that agreement, if the owners forget about something they lent, the illiterate people tell them: We will give back everything you know that we owe you. Can you find out a creditor more honest than God Who know even the things which you haven't given Him yet? So, you must entrust Him with your forgiven mistakes, and you must tell Him: "Master, because of being a mistake too, the fact that I have forgiven my mistakes, and for only to You, for You are the knower of the people, I have mistaken everything, please forgive me all my mistakes, according to Your love for people[749]. And You are glorified forever. Amen.

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[748] Only now it is answered the question if it is good for somebody, under the pretext of fearing God, to pass from a thing to another and so not being able to fulfill anything as it should. Actually, him who is occupied with doing something good, he could suddenly remember a past sin accompanied with fear and sadness so that can stop him from fulfilling that god thing. That's why, Barsanuphius, it establishes some certain moments in time for remembering his sins with sadness. The man must be master upon his thoughts, even if they are good thoughts, and he must not allow himself to be mastered by his thoughts. The man must regulate the time when he allows his thoughts to enter his mind, so that he won't allow his thoughts to enter his mind whenever they want.

[749] To say so, we entrust all our sins to God. If we confess our sins and if we ask for forgiveness, God will not longer keep them into His memory. But it happens that we do not remember many of our mistakes and we do not ask God to remove them from His memory. But Barsanuphius says that God will remove even those mistakes of ours from His memory if we ask God for a general forgiveness because of not being us able to ask for their individual and specific forgiveness, because of having us forgotten them. But God remember those forgotten by us mistakes of ours, and not because God wants to keep those unforgotten by Him, but in order Him to forgive us for those forgotten by us mistakes of ours. This is because, that what is not individually forgive by God it won't bring out of God a healing of the trace left within man by that mistake of his. The forgiveness from God is not a juridical exoneration, but it is a healing. God has those within Himself only for he looks with mercy at the traces left within us by our sins, meaning those sins which we cannot remember about in order us to confess them, and which remain within us as some wounds oozing puss. That's why God will heal us of those even if we shout out at Him to totally heal us from the traces

397. The question of the same one: On occasions I am offended by something and it immediately is shown to me that I have been offended unjustly, and that shames me up. Is it shit from God, in order to correct me or is it from the evil one towards my damnation?

The answer of Barsanuphius: If we pay attention at the previous answer, we will see that this question too it finds its answer therein. As it was said, if we do not prove through our deeds that we remember the fear of God and the pricking caused by that fear, we will be condemned, while, if we correct ourselves by deeds, that rebuking will be from God and towards our salvation and not by the work of the devil towards our damnation.

398. The question of the same one towards the same one: If a lose something and, because of fearing my damnation, I do not accuse somebody of having that thing lost by me, but I suspect him, would that be inappropriate if I inquired him to see if he really had that thing? This is for I cannot stand losing that thing.

The answer of Barsanuphius: It isn't appropriate to inquire him to see whether he has that thing. But if you proved that he had that thing, you shouldn't try to shame him up. But be satisfied with regaining that thing back.

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left within us by our sins. But the healing is being done by the mercy of God, that is overpoured within us like a honey, for us too by our shouting out at Him, us to show that we no longer suffer of that state of egotistic petrifaction of ours, but we appeal Him with our humanity longing to be healed by Him.

We must also mention here that this healing takes place especially through a priest, for through his always actual responsibility for the people he shepherds, upheld by the conscience of sending them to God, a conscience upheld by grace, the priest can communicate to the man through his understanding forgiveness given to the man united with the healing, for also the believer who is woken up through the responsibility of the priest to his responsibility in front of God, the believer wakes up by confessing his humanity longing for getting freed from his callousness and form his indifference of his sinful state.

399. Question and a solicitation: A layman loving of Christ confessed to the same Great Oldman his mistakes and he prayed for being his mistakes forgiven. And the Great Oldman answered him and told him:

He who unveils his sins, he will receive the forgiveness for his sins[750], according to the Scripture that says: "You first tell your sins, so that you to get corrected" (Isa. 43: 26); and again: "I said: I will confess against myself my lawlessness to the Lord and You will have forgiven the faithlessness of my heart" (Isa. 31: 5). So, brother, let's guard on ourselves from now on. This is for the mistakes from until now have been forgiven to us by God.

400. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Tell me, Father, how comes that my soul doesn't cry, despite having many wounds?

The answer of Barsanuphius: He who feels that what he has lost, he will want to cry for that what he has lost. And he who wants something, he will take upon him many travels and troubles, in his perseverance for achieving the desired thing.

401. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: If somebody wants to do something good for his own benefit out of another desire of his, will that be reckoned him towards righteousness?

The answer of Barsanuphius: We know that if somebody fasts and mixes in his fasting that what he wanted, of by searching for the human glory or for gaining something out of fasting, that fasting will be disgusting to God. This is because the Israelites fasted too, but because they were of committing

[750] "He will be corrected of them". It is not only a forgiveness of the sin, but it is also a straightening of the man so that will no longer able to commit those sins. The confessions of the sins it is the fundamental condition for the man to be corrected of them. By confessing his sins, the man's heart gets sensitized and it gets out of its callousness and superficiality which previously made the heart to be complacent into evil. The healing of the man starts due to a work of God, a work taking place through the word told by some believer, but especially through the priest who is continuously living his responsibility for people in front of God.

lawlessness on the fasting days and they were fulfilling their wills, God condemned them through Prophet Isaiah, saying them: "This is not the fasting I has chosen: (Isa. 58: 5). It is likewise here. Every good thing that is not committed solely due to the love for God, but that thing has mixed in it the man's will, it is a defiled thing and it is rejected by God[751]. This thing can be known also out of the godlike law. This is for it says: "Do not sow your field with mixed seeds. Neither make your coat out of flax and wool" (The Secon Law 22: 9-11). And if we want to see that that was told about deeds, the Ecclesiastes interprets this, by saying: "Your cloths be always white" (Eccl. 9: 8). By this he shows that the deed must always be clean. So, if the committed thing has something out of the will of his who commits it, that dee has been defiled and it won't be pleasant to God. And too the Lord told to His disciples about the deeds: "Guard yourself against the liar prophets who come to you clothed in sheepskins, but they are ravening wolves within. Out of their fruits you will know them" (Mt. 7: 15-16). Let's therefore strive to not do the thing of God for nothing else except for God[752]. If a thing isn't committed thus, God won't need us in order that thing to be committed through us[753]. This is for God

[751] The good deed done out of some personal interest, or towards the vain-glory, it is defiled by egotism and it rather aims at deceiving the people. That's why such a dee is only apparently good. At a given time, that deed will be unmasked and it will be exposed the hideous real image of him who wears make up. God wants us to totally renounce to ourselves for our love for Him and for people. Only through that we really united ourselves with Him and with our fellow humans. Only by doing so we will no longer remain ourselves hidden to our fellow humans and we will no longer pose a danger to them, a danger that the more it is masked the more dangerous will be. But only him who bestows thus, only him will truly accomplish himself as true man. Only the open man who works for his fellow humans, and who works for God Whom all the people can be united within as in Him Who loves all the people, only such an open man is the fully and rightly developed man, a man who is non-crooked and non-locked up in his helplessness. The all-good God cannot enter the proud man because that would have meant that man to become good and open at his turn, but that man doesn't accept such a thing. And one cannot be forcedly made kind.

[752] When we do something for God, then we truly do that thing for others. This is for God directs all the things towards people. Then we serve God's work for the salvation and for the eternal happiness of the people. If we do something for people but we exclude God from that thing, we won't help the people to reach the eternal happiness, because we close up their path to God.

[753] If God uses us for a good deed, that is not because God needs us for that deed to be done, but that is because God wants us to become kind by working the good deeds. This is for the deed isn't separated from him who commits it. The deed will be imprinted, in the first place, within him who commits it. Of course, by that, also them whom we do good deeds for, they will become kind too. Nobody is saved in isolation. One finds God and his fellow humans

doesn't need somebody else whom His work to be dome through, in an undefiled manner. So, while committing the good, let's take vigil lest to make useless our efforts because we want to do our will.

402. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Though I started learning later, I am learning the psalms faster. Does this come to me from the devils?

The answer of Barsanuphius: Everything that God allows you to learn, you will learn those with humbleness, for the learning of the word of God easily, it doesn't come from the devils but it is a seed from God. But if somebody is not focused on God, the enemy will sow his tares (Mt. 13: 25). And if you want to humble your thought, tell to your thought the parable: "If somebody received a number of silver coins as those servants received (Mt. 25: 14) and he doesn't gain more with those and he doesn't multiply those, what will it happen to him?". And your thought will answer you: "Like that servant who buried the silver of his master". Consequently, tell you thought: "So, do not get haughty for filling the sky up with unfruitful words. This is because those are towards my damnation"[754].

403. The question of the same of towards the same one: If the good is from God, but it has been given to the sinners too, why it has been the good given to them too?

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whom him to commit his good deeds through. By doing the good we open ourselves to our fellow humans and to God Who is the spring of the good and of the love for all people. In the good we transcend ourselves together with our fellow humans into God and we meet God. In doing the good we will be liberated from the forces pulling us downwards and which divide and enslave us.

[754] Regardless what the man succeeds doing, let him not forget about the fact that he does everything on the ground of a gift he received from God. Let him therefore keep his humbleness. On the other hand, the man must not bury the received gift, but he must multiply it towards his and others' growth towards the Kingdom of God. Let the man not bury his gift into ground if it's about material things, or not to waste that gift in fruitless words scattered in the thin air, word which have no use either for himself or for others. Let him take heed even more not to spread such words in order to harm others. This is for any gifts implies also a responsibility for being used well and for being developed. The bigger the gift is, the bigger the responsibility will be. This is because that gift can do better or more harm as it is bigger. In the last case, that gift becomes to you a ground for your damnation.

The answer of Barsanuphius: All the giving of good it is proven to be from God (Jas. 1: 17). This is for God being good, all the good things come from Him: to the righteous ones as ones who are worthy of that, and to the sinners for, by being the good done to them, they to come to repentance. This is for the godlike Paul says: "I am the first among the sinners, but I have found mercy, for Christ to show in my the first, His long-patience" (1 Tim. 1: 15-16).

404. The question of the same one towards the same one: How can one thank worthily to God?

When the people, who are nothing, give somebody regardless how unimportant thing, of they escape one from some big troubles, that one confesses his gratitude and he let everybody else know the good done to him. How much more and with what mouth we ought to thank God Who always fills us up with His kindness. This is for He created us in the first place, and then He gives us His help against our enemies, and He gives us: the wisdom of our mind, the health of our body, the light of our eyes, the breath of our life and, that what is more than everything, He gives us time for repentance and the possibility of receiving His Body and Blood towards the forgiveness of our sins and towards straightening our heart. This is for "The bread strengthens the man's heart" (Ps. 103: 17[755]). And if somebody reckoned that that was said about the material bread, why the Ghost said again that "not only with bread will the man live, but also with all the word coming out of God's mouth" (The Second Law 8: 3).

If the people reward and thank on one another for material and corruptible things, what could we give, in exchange, to Him Who has been crucified for us, if we want to give Him something in exchange? We must endure to death for

[755] In KJB we have: Ps. 104: 14-15: "He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth; // And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart."; in ROB we have: Ps. 103: 15-17: "You Who sprouts out grass for the beasts and greenery for the service of the people; // In order they to bring bread out of earth and the wine gladdens the man's heart; // Him to gladden the face with oil and the bread strengthens the man's heart." (E. l. t.'s n.)

Him. So, it is not difficult you to understand the gratitude owed by people to God, especially by the sinners, once He died for us. If you want to thank to a man who has been imprisoned for you, and that is above your powers, won't you all the more ought to thank Him Who died for you? You must know that we never reach to thank Him according to worthiness. But we still must thank Him according to our power, both with our mouth and with your hands. And though His love for people He will take heed at us and he will count us together with that widow for her two pennies (Mk. 12: 42)[756].

Let these things be said regarding the sinners. This is for, even if the righteous ones are cut in pieces and killed, they will bring plentiful thanks, according to the Saint Apostle who says: "give thanks in everything" (1 Thes. 5: 18), or course, give thanks to God. For Who it is due the glory forever. Amen.

405. The question of the same one towards the same Oldman: "Is it possible that the devils to do good to somebody? And how can one see that that good is devilish? And what consists of the difference between the devilish goo and the godlike good?

The answer of Barsanuphius: It happen that one believes that something good can come to somebody from the evil, in order him to be deluded. But all the good coming from the devil towards the man's deceit, if examined in detail, it will be proven as a pretending thing. This is for it is a liar good and there is not truth in it, as it will be proven by the last one whom that pretended good reaches to. This is because the end of the light

[756] Above all the signs of love from God towards us, Barsanuphius sees the fact that He made Himself man in order Him to die for us. If we do not know hos to thank a man who accepted his death for us a few years earlier in order him to prolong our earthly life for a few more years, how much more should we thank Him Who accepted to die when He was unable to die by any means, and by doing that he provided us with the eternal life? And even more than that, by our thankfulness, though so unimportant one, we make Him love us and, even more than that, He rejoices of our unimportant love as for a means which we open ourselves through, to the happiness He wans to give it to us?

If the urge for giving thanks is sown within us as a means of union among ourselves, and for rejoicing of one another, why would it be difficult to use this urge sown within us by Him, towards Himself, in order us to warm up our own life and to make Him glad too? In this too, it is shown the existential trait that is warm, living, and of-life-making, of the relationship between us and God Who fills up both the public cult of the Church and our private prayers.

it is the darkness[757], according to the Apostle who talks about the angels of the devil which pretend to be servants of the righteousness, but "whose end will be according to their deeds" (2 Cor. 11: 14-15); or, according to our Savior: "Out of their fruits you will know them" (Mt. 7: 16). If you examine into knowledge and with right-reckoning (with discernment), you will find out, doubtlessly, that in the good reckoned from the devil there won't be any trace of good, but there will be either vain-glory, or disturbance, or something similar[758]. The good from God always increases the light and the humbleness of the heart, and it bring the man to peace. So, if we fall under some deceit from the devil, because of our nescience, but then we discover the temptation, let's turn ourselves back and run to Him Who can banish that temptation away from us. But we must know that some people know immediately, from the very beginning, the difference, while the sinners will know that only at the end where they reach through temptation, similar to an experienced goldsmith who received a jewelry and he can tell, before melting it down, whether that jewelry is made of gold or not; but the inexperienced man cannot tell that except after testing it into fire.

406. Question: When the devil reckoned to come from the devils it is exposed, tell me how can one escape its danger?

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[757] The evil one puts on the mask of the good in order him to deceive that one whom he wants to do evil to, or to attract him to evil by deluding him that he attracts him at good. But the devils' purpose remains the evil and, after the devil succeeds in doing evil to somebody or in attracted somebody to do evil, the devil will get off the mask of the good, so that hiem who has been deluded by the mask of the pretended good he will see the evil dome to him or the evil he has been attracted to. And either he renounces to the evil which he has been urged to, or he remains in that evil if he has got sweetened by that evil, he will realize that that pretended good it actually is evil. There are some faithless people who claim to do good, but they do that out of their pride and in order to attract others too to faithlessness. This is another evil masked as good. But the evil will get his mask off, after a while, because it cannot pretend anymore. And to them who have power of discernment, the evil cannot totally mask itself.

[758] In the true good that spring out of God, everything is clear and clean and sincere. And that good make the man whom that good it fulfilled by, and whom that good is imprinted within, to be at his turn: clear, clean and sincere. The apparent good, on the contrary, it will make the man meandrous, disturbed, pretending, searching for crooked ways and for dark sides. Through that good won't be accomplished the true and righteous and transparent and luminous man.

Question: We must always reckon the good things as good. But if it is proven that that that (😁) seemed to be good it is actually evil, one will have to reject it. Behold and example: If somebody sees a food and he reckoned that food as good, but after tasting it he ascertains that that is bitter and he immediately spits that off and he gets disgusted of it because of its bitterness, either because it is a nut, or an almond, or something else, he won't be guilty at all because of tasting that. But if after he has discovered that bitterness, he insists to eat that, and he fill his stomach up with that, he will be guilty because of his deed. Here too it is likewise. If the devil has mocked the man and the man finds that out and he tells: "Master, the evil one mocked me, please forgive me!", the Lord will forgive him. This is for the lord is merciful. You must know, my beloved one, that God doesn't allow somebody to be tempted above his power (1 Cor. 10: 13). Let's present to our Lord, in everything, our ask, and He will help us to discern between the true good and that that only seemingly is good. Him it is due the glory forever. Amen.

407. Question: If a thing seems to me according to God but a contrary thought opposes that and impedes me and tells me not to do that thing because of not being good, how can I know which one is the real good?

Answer: If a thing seems to you as being according to God, but a contrary thought opposes that, you could know out of that that that (😁) truly is according to God if, by praying, our heart strongly adheres to that thing and it trust increases instead of diminishing, and then the contrary thought either keeps bothering us or not, we will know that that thing is according to God. This is for the opposition to that good it bothers us because of the envy of the devil. But the good can be better proven by praying. And if that good is only an apparent good, and if it has been sneaked in to us by the devil that resists that good, then even that that seems to be good it will decrease in showing that as good, but it will also decrease the opposition of the enemy to it. This is because the enemy causes the appearance that right than thought sneaked in by him it

opposes, so that by that he to deceive us to reckon that as good[759].

408. The question of the same one: So, what it will follow? When the good is done without trouble, it won't be from God; or, if it happened to me to do some small good without, I being bothered by some thought, will I have done that at an inappropriate time and God won't like that what will have been done? Please, Father, enlighten my heart!

Answer: If somebody did something good and there was no thought bothering him, he mustn't believe that he wouldn't fall into trouble. This is for every good is chained on the way to God and He is not a liar Who said: "Crooked and full of troubles is that way leading us to life" (Mt. 7: 14)[760]. This is because, even though there doesn't occur any trouble when that good is being done, it is needed the man to be troubled after that. And when somebody does the good zealously, he won't feel the trouble, but neither can we tall that he won't live that trouble, for the trouble come in many ways. This is for, if we want to look at this in more details, we will see the trouble either hidden into the vain-glory – this is because this too belongs to the troubles – or within a person who impeded us from seeing it (or us to do that good), or in the fact that after that we will need the thing we will have given by committing that benefaction[761]. This is because, by not having those at hand, we will turn ourselves towards the sorrow for giving them away. And, lo, that thought that bothers us won't be absent. So, we should not be sure

[759] In the last place, the prayer done seriously, it will give us the possibility to decide whether a thing which we want to do is from God and so we should do that or not. The prayer gets us out of the doubt if a thought truly is from God or that thought is only apparently from God.

[760] The man who does the good is strengthened on two ways: by the fact that he does that good and by the fact that he courageously endures the trouble that will be caused him by the good he has done. This is because both from the devil and form the weakness imprinted within us and within others, there will occur an opposition to that good which we want to do or which we have done it (in order to pull us backwards).

[761] The trouble intertwines within the good done by us it can be as well hidden into our vain-glory, or in telling about it, braggingly, to somebody else etc. Those are forms which do not bother us, but neither they allow us to advance by doing that good. Only is train ourselves also in the struggle for removing these sinful shadows from the good, we will truly get strengthened, or we will truly advance int our true freedom from the evil, into the fully authentic man.

before time. This is because the unwise ones are waited for the trouble even after that. This is for he says: "I have prepared myself and I hasn't been troubled" (Ps. 118: 60[762]). And blessed is him who always has in front of his eyes the thought that "of God if the earth and its fullness" (Ps. 23: 1[763]) and who cogitates that powerful is God for providing as He wishes the things of His servants. One who does that won't feel sorry because of the things he has bestowed. And if the trouble comes upon us, we will know that God will have allowed us. This is for God never overlooks them who fear Him, especially on those who work on His behalf.

409. Question: Does the man think at certain good out of his will?

Answer: It often happens that somebody thinks at something good out of the movement of his natural thought. But that also must be attributed to God. This is for the nature is the creation of God. And we must know that we won't be able to bring such a good thing to its end except through the commandment of God. This is for by placing God's commandment in front of our eyes, our heart will be strengthened in order to fulfill that good[764].

410. Question: When I do something good, must I humble my thought? And how will I uphold within me my self-appreciation once I will have done that good?

[762] In KJB we have: Ps. 119: 60: "I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments."; in ROB we have: Ps. 118: 60: "I was ready and I didn't get trouble to keep Your commandments." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[763] In KJB we have: Ps. 24: 1: "THE earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."; in ROB we have: "Of the Lord is the earth and its fullness; and the world and all of those who inhabit it." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[764] The awareness about God and the knowledge about some commandments issued by God, it will strengthen us to fulfill an aspiration towards good as sown within our nature. This is for such a fulfillment requires effort which our weakened nature doesn't easily make it. The good intentions are still far from their accomplishment. Between wanting to master yourself and you reaching to do that, there is a long distance.

Answer: In order to humble your thought, after you have done all the good and after you have kept the commandments, you will remember Him Who said: "After you will have done all of these, you will say that worthless servants we are, for we have done that what we owed to" (Lk. 17: 10). How much more must we humble our thought because of not having us reached to fulfill even one commandment. And we always must take care of what we haven't fulfilled yet, and we must despise us for any good deed of ours, by saying: "We do not know if it is pleasant to God (Paterikon, Agathon: 29). Actually, going the will of God in a deed, it is a big deal. This is for that it consists of fulfilling all the commandments[765]. Doing the will of God in a deed it still is only a part – and even a very small part of that – of fulfilling it. That's why the Apostle said: "By forgetting about the things from behind and by stretching myself towards the things from ahead" (Phi. 3: 13). So, as long as one tends forwards, he won't stop, but he will always see himself as not having yet reached his target and as advancing towards his target. This is for the Apostle himself said: "As many as we are consummate, let's think at this" (Phil. 3: 18) so we will advance[766]. But he also said this: "And if you think at other things too, God will unveil to you these things too" (Phil. 3: 15)[767].

411. The question of the same one: When I keep a commandment, how can I escape my pride, in order I to realize if I truly have committed a good, or I am foreign to that good?

[765] The Volos Edition commenting the word from above that "we haven't reached to fulfill even one commandment", it says: "We might have not reached to fulfill it according to all the circumstances depending on the person, on the place, on the time, and on the cause, and consummately and the most zealously". Each commandment of God expresses His whole will referring to the whole creation. Only Him can wholly fulfill that. If we had fulfilled God's will totally, that would; have meant a total identification of us to Him. But we continuously advance in evermore-fully fulfilling His will.

[766] Being consummate means, according to Saint Apostle Paul, to continuously tending higher. This is the consummation of the man: the continuous tension, the non-stopping, the non-sliding downwards. It is a going on consummation, by constantly aiming at the final target. In this we experience God Who is always transcendent, and towards Whom we ceaselessly transcend, according to Gregory of Nyssa.

[767] Even Saint Paul admitted that one could think at something else as well, and that's why he didn't dare to clarify that things too, but he hoped that God will enlighten that person.

Answer; Brother, we must reckon the good deeds as goo and we must run towards them for they are good. We mustn't consider the good as evil except in case that one doesn't do the good as it is pleasant to God. And this one is done evil because of the lack of discernment (of right-reckoning) of him who does that. The must must strive himself to always do the good and then him who lack the power will be given by the grace of God to do that good in the fear of God. And if the good is done through you, you will thank to the Giver of the good things as to Him Whom the good belongs to. Ad you will despise yourself, by saying: "If I too helped to being this thing fulfilled, I too would be partaker to the good". And then you will see yourself praying to God into the pricking of your heart, so that God to found you worthy of the good committed through you[768].

412. Question of the same one towards the same one: If it happens to me to prove long-patience to something, I will be engulfed by the thought of my pride. What should I cogitate at in such a case?

Answer: I told you before that if it happens to you to do any good, you must know that that good is a gift from God bestowed to you due to God's kindness. This is for God has mercy on all people. But take heed at yourself, lest because of your weakness you to lose His mercy had by Him on all sinners. So, if you gave in a good manner, you should not lose that what you have been given in an evil manner[769]. And the way of losing

[768] Here are give four moment in fulfilling the good: a) strive yourself to do the good; b) ask God for the power you to do the good; c) if the good has been done, you will thank to God for being that good done and you won't reckon yourself as having done that good; d) if you have done it so, the prayer full of humbleness and of repentance for the thought of glory that has come to you, it will make you partaker too to the good done through you. By striving and by asking God for help, we will reach to be the good fulfilled through us, but the good wont' be fulfilled only by us. By giving thanks through prayer with humbleness and with repentance because of the thought that has come to us, we will be too made partaker to the good done through us. We can give only our striving and our ask for help. Our thankful prayer with humbleness and with repentance stops us from getting haughty as we would have been the ones who had done the good. And we will become partaker to the done good only by that, and ourselves will become good.

[769] It is being repeated here that what was said in the previous letter: God could do a good through you, as He can do through all the sinners. This is for any good comes from God. But if you attribute to yourself the good done through you (as through a physical agent), you won't be made partaker to that good, but you will remain exterior to that good. Your pride

this thing is the following: to praise on yourself that you have had long-patience and to forget about God Who has done the good. By doing that, you won't only lose your good, but you will also bring damnation upon yourself, because of you daring to attribute to yourself that what you should rather give thanks for, to the loving-of-people God. This is for the Apostle says: "What do you have and you haven't been given that?" (1 Cor. 4: 7). And to your thought that praises you for any kind of things, you will answer that thought of yours by telling it that they who sail on the sea, even though could happen to them to enjoy some peace, they still must expect storm to come, and danger, and shipwreck. This is for the short time of peace won't assure then against those. They will be safe only after entering the harbor. And many saw their ships getting wrecked at the harbor's entrance. It is alike in the case of the sinner, as long as he still is withing world, he always must tremble because of fearing his sinking. Do not ever allow yourself to be deceived by believing your thought which praises you for a good deed of yours. This is for the good belongs to God and we must not be sure that the good willer main within us, given our carelessness. And how dare we gat haughty in our thought?

314. Question: If I tell to my thought, in order to humble it, that neither the long-patience has come to me from God, but it has come to me from the evil one in order to push me into pride, won't I anger God because of I doing that, given the fact that all the good things come from God?

Answer: It is not evil to say that your long-patience hasn't come from God. This is for God doesn't get angry on that, for you tell that in order to destroy your evil thought. Actually, a certain one among the saints talked about the donkey dead on the road to those people who came to visit him (Paterikon, Anthony: 12). And those visitors wondered about where he

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will estrange you from any good done through you. Only by being you aware of encountering God and only by keeping you this connection with God, you too will be united with God as a subject, for God is the supreme Subject of the good. Getting separated from God will make you non-partaker to God's kindness, and it will make the good unassimilated to your person. The individualistic affirmation has nothing good in it, because of begin the fruit of the egotism. This is for the good commits the communion with all the people, or the kindness is one with the communion with all the people into God.

knew that from, and he answered them: "The devils told me that", though the knowledge about what happened it came to him from God. But he told that in order his visitors to benefit of it[770]. And he didn't anger God.

414. Question: If it happened to the sinner to have visions, mut him by any means not to believe those as coming from God?

Answer: If that happens to a sinner it will be obvious that it has come to him from the cunning devils, in order they to deceive that miserable soul towards perdition. So, the sinner must never believe those visions, but he must confess his sins and his weakness and he smut always live in fear and tremble.

415. Question: Must we do the same when the image of our Lord Christ appears to us, or should I turn our face away from it?

Answer: all the more we must turn our eyes away from that cunningness and deceit, and we must give that vision to anathema. Do not ever allow yourself, brother, to be you deluded by this devilish work. The saints are partakers to godlike visions, but those visions always are preceded by quietude, by peace, and by a joy within their hearts. And despite knowing the truth, they will reckon themselves as unworthy of that. All the more must the sinners not believe such views, by knowing that they are unworthy of them.

416. Question: Tell me, Father, how dares the devil show us our Master Christ or the Holy Impartation, either in vision or in a hallucination of our dreams?

Answer: The devil cannot show us on our Master Christ Himself, neither can the devil show us the Holy Impartation, but he only lies and he only tale the countenance of some man

[770] He told that in order himself not to be tempted by pride for being in such a tight connection with God so that God teel him things happening at distance. He said "from the devils" in order him to show that those ones can add their temptation to that foretelling.

or of the simple bread. But the devils surely cannot show us the holy cross, because of not finding another image which the devil could imitate the cross with. This is for in the holy cross the whole devil's power have been abolished, and through the holy cross the devil has received the deadly blow[771]. Ww do not know our Master Christ according to the body and that's why the devil attempts to convince us by lying to us that he is Him, in order us to believe that deceit as true, so that we to be destroyed. So, if you see in your dreams the sign of the cross, you will know that that dream is true and it is from God. But you will hurry up to receive the assurance from the saints that that vision has been true, and you won't trust your thought[772].

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[771] The devil doesn't promise you the happiness by enduring the cross. It is true that there are also people who accept to die for an ideal. But that is an earthly ideal. No one accept to suffer for the true consummation of a spiritual order, and no one renounce forever to the earthly life for the happy life from after death. Through Christ's cross has been showed that no temptation from the devil leads to the true life. The whole temptation power of the devil has been destroyed through cross. Accepting the cross means the man renouncing even to his pride as attractive means which one could gain happiness through. That's why the member of some form of Christendom who reject the cross, they cannot reject their pride of being saved by themselves, or by themselves too. Through cross itself the death as upheld by the devil as "dead life" has been killed.

On the other hand, the cross is one in its sense and shape, so that it cannot be replaced for something imitating the cross. But the persons are many and each human face reflects a different souly content, especially regarding the good and the evil, but each of them having the possibility of imitating somebody else in that regard, up to a certain point. In this it is given also the possibility that the people can be deceived by their fellow humans who can take the countenance of the good when they actually are evil. And in this too, it is given the possibility that the devil can put on an image of an apparently good human being, or even imitating the image of Christ. But this doesn't mean that we mustn't pain the icon of Christ, for the icon doesn't claim being the Person of Christ Himself, as any hallucination about Christ claims it. The icon doesn't ask us to take it as Christ's reality and so us to worship the icon as we do to the original, as the hallucination urges us to do. This is for the icon invites us to transcend it, in order the icon to place us in unseen connection with the original.

[772] In the Volos Edition: "The saint reassures the reader. This is for, by telling him than if the sign of the cross appears in his dream, that dream will be true, but he still asks the reader, in continuation, not to trust his own thought but to ask the saints and him to get reassured about that thought by the saints. This is for many times, by thinking that some people have seen the sign of the cross in their sleep, but they have seen it confusedly and indistinctly, and not distinctly and limpidly; or they have seen together with the sign of the cross other strange and inappropriate images. Out of that one can see that that dream too has bene out of the enemy's deceit. It turns out then, that the best and surest thing to do it one not to believe to any of his dreams. This is "because many were lost because of their dreams" says Sirach. (It is about the book called *The Wisdom of Joshua the Son of Sirach (The Ecclesiastes)*, a book that is not given in the KJB, but it is given in the ROB. The interested reader can download it from free, from www.academia.edu, together with other thirteen books, under the title *Bible Missing Texts* (E. l. t.'s n.))

May our Lord enlighten the thoughts of your understanding, brother, in order you to escape the while deceit form the enemy.

417. Question: My thought tells me: "If the holy cross will appear to you, because of being you worthless, do not get pride". And this cause me fear.

Answer: Do not worry about that. This is for, it the holy cross appears to you, the holy cross will banish away from you the breath of your pride[773]. This is for there where God is, there won't be any evil[774].

418: Question: I have heard that if a one dreams the same dream for three times, that will be a sign that that dream has been true. Is it so, Father?

Question: It isn't so. One must not believe either to such a dream. This is because of that he who has shown himself once to somebody, through lie, he can do that for three times or even for many times. So, do not let yourself to be mocked, but you smut take heed at yourself, brother.

419. Question: Sometimes I see within my heart cunning thoughts stalking around my cogitation, as some beasts, but without causing me any harm. What is this?

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[773] The sign of the cross produces us humbleness when we look at it with faith. This is for we see that our salvation has come to us by the fact that Christ humbled Himself to the death. Only through that it comes to us too. This is for we have done nothing in order us to be saved. And if we believe that we save ourselves on our own, namely if we get haughty, we won't be saved, because of not believing us into the holy cross. So, the one looking at the cross with pride and with despise, he shows that he doesn't believe in the cross and by not humbling on himself he won't be saved. This is because of remaining him trusting his own powers which will be in the end proven as helpless.

[774] There where the cross is, there God is. Where there the cross is, there is the announcement that we cannot be saved by ourselves, and that neither God Himself saves us through a commanding act of pride, but God does that by descending to us, and in that descent, there is His true love for us. So, the cross shows us the true God Who cannot be proud or an avenger or a dominator, but God is gentle and humble and loving of people. There where the cross is, there can be seen the true God Whom nothing evil can be within.

Answer: This is a deceit from the enemy having hidden in it the pride, aiming to convince you that the evil thoughts cannot make you do any evil and so your heart to get haughty. But do not let yourself to be deceived. And remember your weakness and your sins. And call upon the name of God to help you against the enemy[775].

420. Question: Can somebody say that the Holy Ghost dwell within a sinner? And if he says, Father, that the Holy Ghost doesn't dwell within the sinners, what are the sinners protected like?

The saints are found worthy of having the Holy Ghost and they become His dwelling place (temple). This is for he says: "I will dwell and I will walk within them" (Lev. 26: 12; 2 Cor. 6: 16). And the sinners are strangers to Him[776], according to the saying: "within the cunning soul there won't enter wisdom" (Wisdom[777] 6: 4). But they are protected by the Ghost's kindness. Let's raise thanks to His untold kindness and to His love for people. For Him it is due the glory forever. Amen.

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[775] You may on occasions think at woman, at money, at drink, as the possibility of boasting yourself, but you do not feel yourself tempted to do the sinful deeds related to those thoughts. But itself your trust of standing strong by yourself, it is a sin. So, your must call upon the name of God in such situations as well, in order you to wake up your conscience that you owe your peace to God. This is because, from pride, you can very easily slide to some sin which the mentioned thoughts tell you about. Only your dialogue with God will protect you against your pride, by showing to you how small you are and how Great God is. You must never have the conscience that you are alone, either in good or in bad. The sentiment that you are alone in the good things it will associate itself with your pride; in evil things, with the desperation. Only out of your communion with God you can have your humbleness, your peace, your hope, and your trust. And when you call upon the name of God, God Himself will come and be present. We cannot place ourselves in connection with somebody who is at a distance from us, except by calling upon his name, or by thinking at his name.

[776] The Volos Edition: "He maybe says that the sinners are stranger to His work, but not also to His power. This is for they who have been baptized, and who have received the grace of the Ghost, even if they commit sins afterwards, they will still have within their heart the grace of the Ghost, but through power and like a spark chocked by passions, and not as work, as the Ghost is within the saints.

[777] Unidentified. It could be either: *The Book of the Wisdom of Solomon* or *The Book of the Wisdom of Joshua the Son of Sirach (The Ecclesiastes)*, but the content doesn't match. These books are not given in the KJB but they are given in ROB. The interested reader can download, for free, all the fourteen missing books from www.academia.edu, under the title *Bible Missing Texts*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

421. Question: If an am in some trouble and I pray and the untold kindness of God helps me, my thought will get haughty for being heard. What should I do?

Answer: If by praying, you have achieved that what you have been asking for, and that's why you have got haughty, it will be obvious that you haven't prayed according to God, neither have you received the help from God, but you have been under the work of the devils in order your heart to get proud. This is for, if the help comes from God, the soul won't get haughty, but the soul rather gets humble and the soul wonders about the great mercy of God Who deigns to have mercy on sinners, despite they are unworthy and they always get upset. The soul wonders about the fact that God doesn't give us according to our sins, but God, in His abundant patience, He overlooks our sins and He suffers us for a long time, and He has mercy on us. That's why the soul won't get proud, but the soul will tremble and glorify God.

422. The question of the same one: I asked you, Father, about the long-patience, and you answered me that both the long-patience and any good deed are gifts from God. And after that, you also told me about prayer and about the help consequent to prayer, that they are not from God. Explain me, I beg you, the meaning of these ones.

Answer: If the good deed or the prayer have been accompanied since the beginning by vain-glory, they have been, doubtlessly, devilish. But if they haven't had in the beginning the vain-glory within them, but they have received it later on, you will have destroyed that what was being done well, like somebody who erects a wall and then after he will tear that wall down. But if your vain-glory has attacked you, but you haven't received it, you will have not been harmed in anything.

423. Question: Often, when I utter the psalms, I feel myself getting proud. What should I tell to this thought?

Answer: When your heart got haughty (proud) during the utterance of the psalms, you should remember that it was written: "Let them who rebel not to get haughty within themselves" (Ps. 65: 6). And rebelling means not reading wisely, with the fear of God. So, you should examine if your thought goes around scattered while you are uttering the psalms. And you will find out, without any doubt, that your thought gets scattered and you anger God.

424. Question: When I get burdened by my thoughts, either when uttering the psalms, or without that, and I call upon the name of God to my help, the enemy whispers me that that is a pride I to reckon that I do good by ceaselessly remembering God. What should I do when this happens to me?

Answer: We know that the ill ones always need the physician and the medicines from him; and they who have been caught by a storm they run towards the harbor lets their ship gets wrecked. That's why the prophet too, he shouts out: "Lord, You have made Yourself our escape from generation to generation" (Ps. 89: 1[778]); and again: "God is our escape and our power, and He is help in the troubles which surround us very" (Ps. 45: 1[779]). And if He is our escape, let's remember that He says: "Call upon Me on the day of your trouble and I will deliver you and you will extoll Me" (Ps. 49: 16[780]). Let's therefore know that if the trouble has arrived, we will have to ceaselessly call upon the merciful God. But by calling upon Him, let's not get us haughty in our thought. This is for, if somebody isn't crazy, he won't boast himself when menaced by his enemy. And if we are not mindless, let's not get haughty in our thought. This is for we have call upon Him when we need that and we run to Him

[778] In KJB we have: Ps. 90: 1: "LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations."; in ROB we have: Ps. 89: 1: "Lord, You have made Yourself our escape, from generation to generation." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[779] In KJB we have: Ps. 46: 1: "GOD is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."; in ROB we have: Ps. 45: 1: "God is our escape and our power, and He is our help into the troubles which surround us." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[780] In KJB we have: Ps. 50: 15: "And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."; in ROB we have: Ps. 49: 16: "And call Me on the day of your trouble and I will deliver you and you will extoll Me." (E. l. t.'s n.)

surrounded by trouble. In addition to all of these, we know that ceaselessly calling upon God's name it is a medicine destroying not only the passions but their work itself. This is for, as the physician imposes the medicine, or as he places a bandage on a wound, and by that the physician works without the sick one known how he does it, likewise the name of God called by us it removes, without us knowing how, all our passions.

425. Question: When my thought[781] *seems to be peaceful and undisturbed, is it good then too to persevere in calling upon the name of Master Christ? I aske this because it sneaks in the thought that, once we are in peace, we no longer need to do that.*

Answer: We must not trust such a peace, if we know about ourselves that we are sinners[782]. This is for the Lord says: "There is no peace to the sinners" Isa. 48: 22). So, if the sinners have no peace, what peace will this be? Let's fear it. This is because it was written: "When I say peace and quietude, then unnoticedly the perdition comes upon them, as the pain of her who has conceived, and they won't escape" (1 Thes. 5: 3). Sometimes it happens that the enemies too, because of their cunningness, they bring some peace to the heart, in order the heart to call the name of God. But we know that the ceaseless calling upon the name of God it annoys him and it weakens him. By knowing this, let's not cease to call upon the name of God to our help. This is for this is a prayer[783]. And we are told:

[781] Almost always it is used in these "Letters" the term "thought" for a state of conscience, for a certain existential state of the conscience. The conscience is, on one hand, the awareness about the self, while on the other hand the conscience is this knowing about the self gets sharpened, it is determined, and it takes the shape of a certain existential disposition. The conscience doesn't remain cold, neutral, though, theoretically, we can discern between the general awareness about the self and this existential quality of it, as between the sea and its always changing wave.

[782] There is too a short period of peace of the beast that has got satiated, or of the man who has momentarily satisfied his pleasure. It is the peace of the body tired by the spasms from during the pleasure. But the passion will again wake up soon.

[783] By calling upon the name of God with love, with praise, with thankfulness for the received help, the soul tells to himself everything that God is to him. And at each time, according to the state and to the need of that moment. It is like a mother uttering the name of her child, she brings within her soul the whole being of her child with everything that characterizes her child, but as she sees her child on that moment. The name isn't only a copy of the whole, but the name is his real whole, one that without ceasing to exist outside too, it is also within the one uttering that name.

"Pray ceaselessly" (1 Thes. 5: 17). And "ceaselessly" is that that has no limit or measure.

426. Question: When the people or the thought from within my heart[784] *praise me and I see myself burdened by that thought, what should I do with that thought?*

Answer: If your thought praises you and you cannot overlook it, you will strive yourself to call upon the name of God, and you will tell to your thought: it is written: "My people, they who bless you, they deceive you, and they crook up the path of your feet" (Isa. 3: 11). This is because, brother, this praise is nothing else but a deceit, it is told by the prophet: "Any man is grass and the whole man's glory is like the grass's flower" (Isa. 40: 6). And about the fact that him who receives the praise from the people doesn't have any benefit from it, it is told by the Master Himself: "How can you believe in me and receive the praise from the people?" (Jn. 5: 44). And if something is done according to God, we must think that "he who praises himself, let him praise himself into the Lord" (1 Cor. 1: 31). Thus, the Apostle who reached great measures, he didn't praise into himself, but he said: "By the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Cor. 15: 10)[785]. Him it is truly due the glory and the greatness forever. Amen.

427. Question: If, therefore, I sing psalms, or I read, and an inappropriate thought occurs to me, will I take heed at that thought and will I stop singing psalms or praying or reading, so that I to resist that thought by using other thoughts?

[784] The conscience out of feeling, the conscience united with the feeling.

[785] The temptation of praising ourselves it breaks us apart from the connection with the great reality that is not from us. Alone, and without the means we have at hand through people and from the nature that is not from people, a nature that includes also a part of our being, but which God is also worker into, we wouldn't be able to do anything. But everything that is put at our disposition by God and by others, it won't abolish the border between them and us. They remain persons and we cannot assimilate them. Likewise, either the nature put at our disposition by a supreme Person, it cannot unplug us, neither can we assimilate that nature wholly. All the more the supreme Person is defended by His border, regardless how much we communicate with Him through what He gives us; but He neither abolished us.

Answer: Despise that thought at take heed with all the care at singing the psalms, at praying, and at reading, in order you to be able to take power from those. This is because, if we accept to occupy ourselves with the thoughts from the enemy, we won't ever be able to do anything. And this is what the enemy aims at. And when you see the thoughts' perseverance to impede you from singing psalms, or from praying, or from reading, neither then will you fight them. This is because it doesn't depend on your power. But you msut call upon the name of God to your help and He will come to your help and He will banish away the enemy's plots[786]. This is for His is the power and the glory forever. Amen.

428. Question: How can one earn the repentance (the pricking of the heart) by prayer, by reading, and by singing psalms?

Answer: The repentance (the pricking of the heart) comes to the man form the ceaseless recalling (of his sins). So, when somebody prays, while praying he must recall his past deeds and so he must think at what will be judged like those who have committed such deeds. Let him think at the fearsome word: "Go away from Me, you the cursed ones, into the eternal fire" (Mt. 25: 4). And by recalling one's sins I mean not each sin individually, lest by remembering something the enemy to cause him another slavery. But let's recall only that we are sunk into the debt of the sins[787]. And after that, if the callousness continues, let it not stop (the recalling). This is for, often, God allows that in order to test a man, whether he perseveres (into the prayer accompanied by recalling his sins"[788].

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[786] Only the conscience of the presence of God, waken up by the calling of His name, it can attract the soul form an inappropriate thought. Only that conscience of the presence of God will get me beyond the limit of my powers. Other thoughts invoked by me against a certain thought won't be able to help me defeating that thought, because of being those thoughts upheld by my weak power.

[787] There are also sins which must be recalled in a specified manner, but other sins must not be called like that, in order they not to tempt to be repeated. The first sins are mostly characteristic to the laymen: abortions, not helping someone, not visiting an ill person, not taking care of parents etc. That's' why at the monks it has been born the habit to say in prayer only: "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me the sinner".

[788] From here was born the concentrated prayer mentioned above. He have in this answer and in the following answer, a subtle analysis of this theme.

Regarding the reading and the singing of psalms, you need your mind to pay attention to the said things, and you need your soul to try and understand the things comprised in what the mind says, and if there are goods let your mind aspire to them; and if there is about punishing the evil deeds, let your mind aspire to escape the menace waiting for those who commit such evil deeds, let your mind persevere in remembering God and in recalling your sins, even if the callousness continues. This is for merciful and long-patient is God and He receives our striving. You must always remember him who said: "Waiting, I have been waiting for the Lord and He took heed at me" (Ps. 39: 1[789]). By persevering into these, you must trust that the mercies of God will soon lean towards you.

429. Question: When I force myself to take heed at the meanings of the psalmody, it often happens to me they to occasion me ugly thoughts.

Answer: If you see that the enemy plots to stir up war to you right from the words of the psalmody, you won't try to find out the exact meaning of the things you utter, but you must only utter those with watchfulness and without scattering. This is for, if you utter those words and only the enemies know their meanigns, the enemies won't be able to resist you. And your psalmody will also keep the place of asking God for destroying your enemies.

430. Question: If during the psalmody or when I am among people, I am troubled by thoughts and I call upon the name of God within my heart, because of not being able to utter God's name with my mouth, and if I think only at God, will that suffice to help me?

Answer: If at the time of psalmody, or among people, you feel the need for calling upon God, you won't think that if you

[789] In KJB we have: Ps. 40: 1: "I WAITED patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me,"; in ROB we have: Ps. 39: 1: "Waiting I have been waiting for the Lord and He has leaned towards me." (E. l. t.'s n.)

do not utter His name with your mouth, you won't call Him. But you must think at the fact that God heart-knower, and you must take heed at your heart and you must call Him within your heart. This if rot that is what the Scripture says: "lock up your door and pray to your Father hiddenly" (Mt. 6: 6). The Scripture asks us to shut up our mouth and us to pray to the Father within our heart. So, he who shuts his mouth up, or he who prays to God within his heart, he will accomplish the mentioned commandment. And if you do not call upon God's name within your heart, but you only think at God, you will reach your target even quicker than calling upon His name[790]. And this will suffice in order you to receive His help.

431. Question: Is it then good to somebody to always think at God in his heart, or him to always pray, without him having the together-working of his tongue? When this happens to me, my thought sinks and I feel myself burdened and it seems to me that I see some sorts of things and of hallucinations and I am like in a dream.

Answer: Only the consummate ones can reach that stage, for they are able to guide their mind and to keep it in the fear of God, in order their mind not to start wandering on all sides and so the mind to get sunk in the deepest scattering and in all sorts of imaginings[791]. But him who cannot always keep his

[790] Thinking at God, it places you even more quickly, or more directly, in connection with God, than remembering His name within your heart; at its turn, remembering God's name within your heart it will place you more quickly than by uttering His name with your mouth. Nothing is quicker than the thought. The thought comprises, directly, the indefinite of the person. The name of the person determines that indefinite to some extent, or it make you enter the Person's indeterminate by a determinate word. But you must have been progressed much in often remembering God's name in order you to be able to think at God often and without using the word. The word is more in your power than the thought. He who reaches to think often or permanently at God, he will have imprinted the whole content of his thinking or of his souly feeling with the thought at God.

[791] There is also a sinking, better said a clogging up, into an endless scattering and imagination. From an idea you pass to another idea which seems to you deeper than the first idea, or you pass from an imagining to another imagining because of seeming that to you as more interesting; and so on. You are sinking yourself like in a labyrinth. To him who is no longer able to keep his thought attached to God, tying his thought to a word, or to the name of God, it will be helpful. He who keeps his thought attached to God without the help of the word, he keeps his thought attached to the same Person-like God Whom he keeps his thought attached to, by name as well, or by the words of the prayer as well. God is a Person-like-God

waken thought at God, he will catch this thought of his and he will tie it to his tongue. Let's give an example: Look at them who swim in the se. They who are more skillful at swimming, they daringly throw themselves into the sea for they know they won't drown. But him who is a beginner to swimming, when he feels himself sinking into the deep of the waters, because he fears of drowning, he will pluck himself out of the sea towards the shore. And after a short period of catching his breath, he will throw himself again into the sea in order him to learn by that how to swim, until he will reach the measure of the ones who are consummate swimmers.

432. Question: What is that that says somebody among Fathers that the entrance of the thoughts is not condemnable, but using them in an evil manner it is condemnable? And Abba Joseph told to one of the brothers: "Cutt off your thoughts quickly", and to another he told: "Let your thoughts enter and talk to them and you will reach to be an experience man" (Paterikon, Joseph of Panephysis: 3).

Answer: The entrance of the thoughts equals their sowing. And that is not a condemnable thing. But using the thoughts in an evil manner, it means agreeing them. This is a condemnable thing. And the difference between letting the thought enter or cutting them off immediately, it is this: he who can resist them and he who can fight them without being defeated, let him allow them enter; and he who is weak and who cannot resist the thoughts, but he knows that he will agree them, let him cut them off and let him run to God.

433. Question: When I am somewhere and there are the relics of the holy martyrs, my thought pushed me to go for many times and to bow down before those. And each time I pass by them my thought urges me to bow my head down. Should I do that?

Who has a personal will, and Who wants to save us in His quality as Person. He who thinks like this, he won't sink himself into a chaotic pantheism that can justify your most nonsensical contradictory thoughts, claiming that all the realities are implied into an essence reckoned as God.

Answer: You should not do that. If you bow down once, that will suffice. So, do not listen to that thought. When you are not pushed by that thought, you bow down by your own decision, for three times. This is because I have heard that the things done with disturbance and with sadness and all the superfluous things come from the devils (Paterikon, Pimen: 129). Likewise, it will suffice if you bow down your head once or at most trice. And do that without being forced by a certain thought.

434. Question: On occasions, I am engulfed by a fear that asks me go inside and pray.

Answer: Do not enter because you fear, but enter at the due time driven by your will to pray to God and to the saints for your salvation.

435. Question: You told me that I should not enter because of fear. But when I want to enter and pray for my salvation, the fear that engulfs me it urges me to stop my prayer for the commandment give to me by you regarding that fear.

Answer: Let not your fear stop you[792]. But you must enter and pray. Do not give any importance to your fear. Do not let your fear either to move you to prayer or to stop you from praying. And you must do all the things at their time and with the fear of God[793].

[792] Let not the fear make you enter the church to pray. But neither let your fear stop you.

[793] Here is expressed the difference between fear (δειλια) and the fear of God (φόβος θεόν). The first one may be the fear of something that can happen to the man within world; the second one is the fear of the judgment of God, the fear of losing the eternal life. This may be one with the discernment done by Heidegger between Furcht and Angst. The "fear" keeps the man tied to this world and it urges the man to pray for some success in the world or for defending himself against some unsuccess in the world. The "fear of God" ties the man to the life form above world and it urges the man to pray for his salvation, in order him not to be lost in the world.

436. I am pushed with restlessness to mark (to seal) myself for many times, either at night, or during the day. What should I do?

Answer: If we do that with watchfulness, it will suffice us to do it even for once, wither at night or during the day. This is for, if we believe that the first sela remains indelible, we won't need a second one. This is because wanting us a second one, it will mean that we do not reckon the first one as persisting[794]. One can see this also out of what is done within world. If sone seals a treasury and the first seal lasts, there won't be needed another sealing. But this is caused by the demons to lead one to carelessness and inattention, in order him not to do that with more watchfulness and cleanly, even though we do that only once. That's why it is good to do this less, but with the fear of God. This will be more beneficial to us than doing it for many times and with disturbance form the enemies. This is for he says: "Better is the little of the righteous" (Ps. 36: 16[795]). I am saying this for the case when the disturbance gets mixed into watchfulness, and so it pushes us to do something at inappropriate time. This is for, when we see our thought rejoicing that we seal on ourselves neither out of fear nor with disturbance, we use that as of something done with the fear of God. This is for that what is done out of own will it is more pleasant to God.

437. Question: When I seal myself with my left hand, because of not being I able to seal myself with my right hand, do I do something inappropriate?

Answer: So far, when I want to seal my right hand, I use my felt hand.

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[794] It seems to be here about a custom practiced by the monks living back then into monasteries and who used to "seal" themselves more often with the sign of the cross, with sanctified oil. The question asks whether is good one to do that in the morning and in the evening, or for several times during day and night (σφραγίζω).

[795] In KJB we have: Ps. 37: 16: "A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked."; in ROB we have: Ps. 36: 16: "Better is the little of the righteous, than the much richness of the sinners." (E. l. t.'s n.)

438. When I pray for many things, should I mention each one of the things in my prayers?

Answer: If you want to pray for many things, once God knows the things you need, you should pray, saying: "Master, Lord Jesus Christ, guide me according to your will"[796]. And if you want to pray against your passions, you will say: "Heal me according to Your will"[797]. And if you pray against temptations, you will say: "You know what is beneficial to me, please help my weakness, and put an end to my temptations according to Your will".

439. Question: If I tarried a little longer to prayer, should I persevere in uttering the same words?

Answer: Not necessarily. But you should persevere in understanding those words. You should take heed only at this: you ask to be done according to the will of God Who can give everything; you must take heed at the purpose of the prayer to

[796] In this Christ feels, as He is a Person non-confounded to me, that I take heed at His will. In living the will of the another, I feel him as a person having a border which I cannot cross it over, as a person whom I cannot confound myself to. When I want to cross over another because of my pride, I will actually no longer know about another person whom I should remain in communion with, and I will lose the experiencing of my own person too. The pride and the pantheism are tightly united. By accepting the will of Christ to be done with my will, I won't either abolish myself as person, but I will get united with Him in the communion of love. I know that He will do with me that what makes me happy, that what gives me a keen conscience of my own person, in communion with Him. Properly-said, that what makes me happy is the communion with another person and, consummately, with the Person of Christ. The another had a border. But himself opens that border to me, without abolishing it. And I will feel both as having a border and opening that border to me, out of love. I myself do not cross over him, without his will. He has a nature like mine, to some extend common, which he increases with the nature from within me. But he has put on his nature his seal and he will communicate his nature to me with his will. This produces me a double-joy: that I am receiving something related to me and that increases me, but also that I am receiving that b y his will, out of his love. This is that what actually rejoices me, and it give me life. This mystery has its culminant degree in the Holy Trinity and it is upheld among us by the Holy trinity. One can speak within the Holy Trinity about a sole will and still about three Persons Who will.

[797] Even by asking Christ for His will to be done within you, regarding your passions, you will be healed of your passions, for you renounce to the pride of your egotism.

be fulfilled, and that purpose is to fulfill that what we ask according to the will of God[798].

440. Question: If somebody wants to manage some things in rightly-believer manner, or if he wants to send those things to somebody for the good pleasure of God, but he doesn't know how to do that and he neither finds guidance from the Fathers, what will he have to say in prayer?

Answer: Let him pray like this: "Lord, I am in Your hands. You know what is beneficial to me. Please guide me according to Your will and do not let me wander by an ill-usage of these things. This is for the things are Yours and You master over them. Rule You, as a Master, so that I will use them into Your fear[799]. For Yours is the glory forever. Amen".

441. Question: When I sit or when I read, or when I do some manual labor, and I want to pray, my thought tells me to orient myself towards East. What should I do, Father?

Answer: Either you sit or you walk, either you eat or you do something else, either you satisfy a need of your body, you

[798] This is that what we mainly must aim at by praying: that our will to be united with the will of God, so that we to open ourselves to God's love for us, and that our border to be open towards Him and His border to be open to us; so that God to communicate top us, for His love, as much as possible from Himself, but without Him to abolish us, but by Him strengthening us in order us too to open ourselves to this love of His. We tell God in prayer that what we feel that we need, but we let Him to fulfill our ask according to how He knows and according to what He wants, and in this too we show our union with Him, without ours of His abolishment as persons; in our prayer we actually ask for Him to come within us, for thought Him comes to us everything.

[799] We are not the ultimate masters of the things or of the nature. We are only their administrators according to the will of God Who knows what they should be used like, for the benefit of all of us. That's why the individuals must not make themselves the master of the things and of the nature, righting and doing injustice to one another, because of the material things, neither must do that the general institutions favoring certain collectivities. Only for it has been given to us in order us to administrate it for our benefit, it is told in Genesis: "Master the earth" (Gen. 1: 28). But we must not forgive about the fact that we must use the things with love for one another and with gratitude for Him Who has given then to us, and we must take in account the fundamental conditions which the things can be beneficial to us both bodily and spiritual; and we must also take in account the will of God Who on each occasion watches for they to be used according to that benefit. That's why we start doing any deed, or we start using each thing, after marking upon it the sign of the cross.

will pray without being preoccupied with the fact that you are oriented towards East of West. This is for we have been commanded to pray ceaselessly (1 Thes. 5: 17) and everywhere (1 Tim. 2: 8). And again, it was written: "Find the way of him who ascends towards sunset: the Lord is His name" (Ps. 67: 4[800]). This shows that our Lord is everywhere. And even when you have your head covered, do not deprive yourself of prayer. Take heed only not to pray with indifference[801].

442. Question: My thought tells me: "you commit sin in everything and you must say in every word and deed and thought: I have sinned. This is because, if you do not confess your sin, you will reckon on yourself as having committed no sin". And I am very tormented by both of these: that I cannot tell that on each one of the mentioned ones, and if I do not say it, I will reckon myself as committing sin.

Answer: We must always be convinced that we have sinned in everything: in word and in deed and in thought. But we cannot tell in each of those that we have sinned. That's why getting sad because of not being able to constantly say that, it is a work from the devils who want to throw us into discouragement. But it is also a sine the thought of reckoning that if we are unable to tell in each of the mentioned things: "I have sinned", we won't actually sin, it is inappropriate. Let's therefore remember the Ecclesiastes who says: "There is a time for speaking, and there is a time for not speaking" (Eccl. 3: 7). Let's say in the morning for the night and for the evening, in prayer: with the pricking of our heart, to our Master God: "Master, forgive all my sins for your holy Name, and heal my soul because I have mistaken against You". And that will suffice to you. This is for, as somebody ahs another whom he has lent a sum of money and he is receiving that sum back in

[800] In KJB we have: Ps. 68: 4: "Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH,"; in ROB we have: Ps. 67: 4: "Sing to God, sing to His name, prepare the way to Him Who crosses the wilderness, the Lord is His name." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[801] The note from Volos Edition: Out of this one can see that in the actual the state of prayer, when we do not do anything else, the man must pray while having their head uncovered, as the Apostle Paul says too (1 Cor. 11: 4).

installments, and he won't ever be able to close the whole deal with that one, by paying, it is likewise here too[802].

443. Question: It happens to me while uttering the psalms that I get scattered with my mind and I wander around. What should I do?

Answer: If you have got scattered, start again reading that psalm from the words which you can remember. And if by trying once, and twice, and trice, you cannot remember those words, or after remembering them you won't be able to advance to the following words, you will start reading that psalm from its beginning. This is because the purpose of the enemy is that or impeding you from extolling God, because of your forgetfulness. And uttering that psalm in continuation means extolling God. But the non-scattering is characteristic to them who have clean senses[803]. And we are weak. So, when we realize that we have got scattered, let's wake up to understand the things we utter, so that our scattering not to become a cause for us to be condemned[804].

444. Question: When I got scattered with my thought during prayer, why should I do?

Answer: If you pray to God and you get scattered, you will fight until you will succeed in praying without scattering. And

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[802] We pay God out debt on instalments. And this should always keep our conscience awake, for we are debtors to God, so that we should tall God always: "I have sinned". But we are unable to always to that. Even more than that, if we always said: "I have sinned", we would get accustomed to it and we would say it without paying attention to it. That's why it is a temptation from the devils you to be discontent by the fact that you cannot always tell: I have sinned". Both out of this answer and out of that answer regarding the "sealing", one can deduce that the authors of the "Letters" would have told the same thing about and often impartation with the body and with the blood of the Lord. This is because this too can lead one to weaken his focusing when receiving them.

[803] He who has clean senses he won't be attracted through them by material things, by persons, or by their memories. That one, when he utters the psalms, he thinks at God. And due to that we won't get scattered away from the meanings of the verses. The clean senses help us to interiorize and by that we will be able to persevere in the encounter with God.

[804] By despising the things told us by God through psalms, we attract upon us the punishment from God, or we will close ourselves against the clean and high life coming from Him, and we will remain into the state of the souly death.

you will watch your mind not to get scattered again. And if the scattering persists, because of our weakness, until the end of the prayer, you will try to reach the pricking of your heart and full of repentance you will say: "Lord, have mercy on me, and forgive me all my mistakes". And you will get forgiveness of all your mistakes and of that scattering happening to you when praying[805].

445. Question: When a brother utters verses during the psalmody, my thought sometimes gets filled with peace, but on some other times it gets scattered. Why should I do?

Answer: When you thought gets filled up with peace and you feel pricked in the heart by the verses uttered by that brother, you will use that thing. And if you see your mind getting enslaved by some other thoughts, you will bring it to pricking in order it to take heed at the doxology uttered by that brother.

446. Question: But it happens to my that while wanting to understand the things uttered by the brother there is a temptation born within me towards him[806]. What should I do?

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[805] Asking God for mercy with the heart's pain, until tearing apart, it will rid us of scattering. And if that happened even for a short while and even from time to time, and if that unveils us our human actualized by encountering the living God producer of human feeling, that will be of great help for our spiritual growth. Without a Person-like God there wouldn't have existed the possibility for a continuous sensitization of the man, because we wouldn't have asked for God mercy with the sentiment that He can give it to us; or with the sentiment that Himself is full of mercy on us, of that He is the source of the mercies. The people who have no mercy, they are not true people. And the soul organ which we feel the mercy through, and which we become merciful through, it is our heart. The heart is the feeling power between person and person, through our heart we have mercy on somebody, but we also feel the mercy from God through our heart. The man having a petrified heart, it is a heartless man, a man whom this organ is no longer functioning within. When the man gets animated, he will feel pricked by his own callousness, but he won't be able to feel himself fully pricked except by encountering the merciful God. God soften our heart by His mercy. Being us pricked by this mercy, our heart regains the feeling of God and it feels the urge to extoll God for the heart to thank God at its turn. And this feeling escapes the man from any scattering if his thought in limited and impersonal things, things which lower the man on a locked-up plan, a monotonous plan of the egotistic pleasures, or of some unimportant discontents.

[806] It happens that while hearing another brother uttering psalms of clean and high content, thought of critique raise up regarding that brother, because of recalling some of his deeds which he didn't like.

Answer: This too is an enslavement[807]. This is because the enemy moves out mind from a thing to another[808]. But you must bring your heart again to pricking when you see the war coming[809]. And rebuke yourself by saying: "Where are you going, you the miserable one? Think at the torments waiting for you. This is because these torments will be endured by them who do or who things such". Job didn't uselessly bring sacrifices for his sons, by saying: "lest they have thought something evil about God in their hearts" (Job 1: 5). And by saying those, attach your mind to the verses. And if you see your mind wandering again, you will rebuke yourself again, and you will do the same up to three times. If that persists, you will separate your mind form what it thinks at, and you won't let your mind without working, but you will think at the judgment from God, saying: "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me".

447. Question: If somebody sits together with the brother while uttering psalms, but he doesn't know the psalms by heart so that he would be able to tell the psalms together with his brothers, what is more beneficial to him: listening to them, or telling for himself those psalms which he knows by heart?

Answer: If he doesn't know by heart those psalms uttered by the brothers, instead of listening to those it will be more beneficial to him to say for himself the psalms which he knows. This is for the hearing is intertwined with the scattering.

448. Question: When a cunning thought comes to me, my heart moves and gets scared and jumps immediately when I

[807] The word "slavery", namely being I unwillingly taken into mastery, it is used only for that what my evil impulses do with me, because of them subjugating my freedom without my full will. God doesn't enslave me for the good doesn't enslave me without my will. I must willingly make myself a "slave" to God. I am a free "slave", I am a "powerful" slave, in everything that is good and that it strengthens me into good. This is not a properly-said slavery.

[808] I am carries away form a "thought place" to another "thought place", from a theme to another, unwillingly, as a bonded slave.

[809] The pricking is also a waking up to the feeling of the true self, it is a waking up form the bluntness of the sinful unconsciousness. The pricking wakes you up also when you are menaced by being enslaved by a sinful deed.

realize the presence of that thought. This is because my heart gets cared because of its weakness, not to be taken into mastery by it. But by doing so, I feel much burden and torment within my soul. Deign, Father, and tell my what should I do under the rushing in of this wicked thought? How should I banish it away?

Answer: This movement consists of not letting yourself convinced by the cunning thought and you not to agree that thought, but in rushing in to God without getting disturbed[810]. So, do not say: "I fear this thought could catch me". This can be understood out of the following example: If somebody takes someone to the justice court for something, and the accused one knows that he cannot answer, he will endure the consequences. But if he has a strong defender, he goes to the justice court daringly, for trusting his defender. And again, if it happens to somebody to fall on the hands of a thief during his travel, if he can resist that thief, he won't let that thief take anything from him and everything will end well. And if the thief takes something from him, it will suffice him to know the thief and the place where the steal took place and he will be able to go to the judge and the judge will serve him justice. This is for the judge won't only help him recover that what has been stolen from him, but the judge will also punish the thief.

So, if the thought enters, do not get disturbed, but find out what that thought wants to do to you and work against that thought without disturbance, by calling upon the Lord. This is for the evil doesn't consists of the fact that the thief enters your house, but the evil consists of getting the things from the house stolen. And if the thief gets out dishonored, the glory will belong to the house's master and the dishonor will be of his who got out without taking anything.

When the Lord comes in the land of Judea, namely in the man's heart, He casts the devils out from there. Therefore, you

[810] He who allows himself to be mastered by an evil thought and he reaches even to do the sinful deed, he doesn't actually move, thought the disturbance from within him let the impression that he moves. He is spiritually dead. And the dead doesn't move. The movement means struggle for freedom, or it means struggle for preserving the freedom and of increasing in freedom. One can feel here the opposition to the Origenistic theory that the movement is the product of the soul's falling off the divine pleroma and the movement bears within itself the seal of the evil. The movement is an ascending running towards God, and it is not a falling off God. The movement is in the service of the good. The movement is not the product of the evil or a progression into evil. This idea will be developed by Saint Maximos the Confessor in "Ambigua".

will shout out towards Him as the Macedonians shouted out towards Paul: "Cross through Macedonia, help us" (Acts: 16: 9); and like the Lord's disciples did: "Master, save us, for we are perishing" (Pk. 8: 24; Mt. 8: 25). And the Lord will wake up and he will rebuke the winds and the winds will get appeased. This is for to Him it is due the power and the glory forever. Amen.

449. Question: For you have told that the heart's movement consists of not letting yourself be convinced by the cunning thought, and it consists of running to God without disturbance, please explain me more the meaning of this movement.

Answer: When somebody is taken by somebody else to a judge, and himself the one taken to the judge goes to that judge, there takes place the willing movement towards the judge of him who is summoned to the judge because an accusation. This is for it is said that because he was accused to the judge, he moved himself to go to the judge[811]. And continuing the strife between them, he who has moved himself won't be held accountable to his accuser as long as the judgment lasts. This is told by the word: "And you will protect his heel" (Gen. 3: 15). The heel means the end[812]. May your heart get stronger through the prayers of the saint. Amen.

450. Question: A brother asked the Great Oldman, saying: Have mercy on me, and tell me how should I save myself? This is for, I have ordered to my though to obey your letter. But my thought hasn't obeyed totally to your letter.

The answer of Barsanuphius: If you truly want to be saved, you should obey in your deed: elevate your feet from the

[811] The devil urges the man to do evil, and then the devil will be the one who will accuse the man in front of God, in order God to let the man under the devil's mastery. But when the defendant moves himself against the devil, and when the man doesn't allow himself to remain "fallen" under the devil's mastery, the man himself runs to God in order to get rid of the devil's accusation.

[812] Here too it is again applied the place from the Genesis, as it has been applied also to the struggle between Christ and the devil. The devil wants to have the final gain (the heel) in the fight against any man. But each man can crush in the end (at the final judgment) the devil's head, if he has been fighting for the whole his life against the devil, and with the power of Christ.

ground and raise your mind to the sky and let there be your cogitation day and night. And despise yourself, with the whole power you have, day and night, while fighting to see yourself bellow everything. This is the true way. Besides this way, there is no other way for him who wants to be saved into Christ Who strengthen him up[813]. He who wants, let him to run! He who wants to run, let him run! He who want to run, let him run! Let him run to take (the crown) (1 Cor. 9: 24)[814]. I testify to you about this, in front the living God Who wants to bestow the eternal life to everybody who wants it[815]. If you want to, work brother!

451. The question of the same one towards the other Oldman: What the good Great Oldman wrote for three times the urge: "He who wants to run, let him run!"?

The answer of John: The Great Oldman wanted to show the benefit of this road; and that there is no other road needed. That's why he uttered that word for three times. This is for the lord Himself told in His Gospel according to Matthew, the word "Amen", for once; but in the Gospel according to John He said that word twice: "Amen, amen I am telling you". This was for in this one the Lord talked to them about very necessary things.

[813] One can reach his humbleness only through power. This is for the worldly extolling is characteristic to frivolousness. This is because of being deceiving. He who is humble, he gets elevate in that what is substantial and it lasts, into truth. He gets elevated in being recognized and it getting power to help and to gain others. Christ, by humbling Himself, He was able to sacrifice Himself for all and He has gained many, forever.

[814] Here is again affirmed that you gain the good by moving yourself. Only him who remains lazy into the evil things, he won't move himself, he won't run himself. And the movement is upheld by will. He who "allows himself to be prey to the evil", he won't move because of not using his will. He who wants to do the good, and to be himself good, he will want to constantly become better, and to do increasingly better. One slides increasingly lower in evil, almost unwillingly. The good has a target that won't ever be fully reached. That target is God. The evil has not target. The evil wants only to repeat a short-lived pleasure.

[815] The eternal happiness crows a will that gets continuously strengthened. The idleness doesn't accomplish the man and that's why it won't be crowned with the happiness of the imperishable fullness of the life.

452. Question: Please tell me why, during the Pentecost, it happens to me that for most of the time I suffer of Idleness and of the temptation of the sleep?

Answer: We suffer of that because we are a stale pond and not a water spring. And then we suffer of this also because the air is changing and the horizons get widened. But the consummate Fathers do not suffer of this.

453. Question: If I see somebody doing something inappropriate, should I judge that as inappropriate? And how should I avoid to condemn my neighbor because of that thing?

Answer: We cannot but judge the inappropriate deed itself but as inappropriate. This is because, otherwise, how could we escape from the harm brought by that inappropriate deed, according to the lord's word Who says: "Guard yourself against the liar prophets who come to you in sheep skins, but they are ravening wolves inside" (Mt. 7: 15-16).

But we must not condemn him who had committed that deed, for the word: "Do not judge so you not to be judged" (mt. 7: 7). But this is also because you must reckon yourselves as more sinner than anyone. Then, because you must reckon the sin of your brother as yours[816] and you must hate the devil who has deceived that brother. This is because, if somebody was pushed into a trap by somebody else, we rebuke him who pushed, likewise is here too. It also happens that somebody commits a deed seeming inappropriate to them who look at that, but him who has committed it he did it on a good purpose. It happened likewise to a holy Father who, passing by a riding contest, he entered to watch it. And by looking at each rider how they were striving to outride other riders and to defeat

[816] At your turn, we have done something that determined somebody form our closeness to commit a sin. At least, we haven't done enough to make that man good. Even by judging our neighbor as incapable of good, it will irradiate out of us something urging our neighbor to commit sin. But the repentance for our contribution had to our neighbor's sin, it will take us to obtain forgiveness for this contribution of ours. And if that one repents at his turn, while being influenced in good by us, he too will be forgiven for his sin. That's why him too who contributed to his neighbor's sin, he will be reckoned through the repentance of his neighbor determined by him, as less burdened by his contribution to his neighbor's sin. We are intertwined, but we are also fee in sinning and in escaping from sinful state through the repentance which we influence each other in.

them, he told to hi thought: "Do you see the great zeal of them who belong to the devil? Shouldn't ourselves fight, all the more for we are the inheritors of the Kingdom of Heavens?". And he left that view and he traveled with much zeal on his road and he fought his spiritual fight with much zeal too. And again, we do not know if that brother who has committed sin, he didn't used the repentance later and he didn't become well-pleasant to God through humbleness and confession. And the Pharisees left condemned by his pride. So, us by knowing this, let's follow the example of the publican and let's condemn ourselves, and so we will be corrected. And let's avoid the pride of the Pharisee, in order us not to be condemned.

454. A loving-of-Christ layman asked the same Oldman: I happens often to me while being together with others, I to get so ashamed of them then I blush[817] *and I look downwards and I no longer am capable of talking to them. Consequently, I feel my heart burdened, my word is clumsy, nonsensical, and full of vain-glory. And often is mixed in my word a nonsensical laughter, occurring unwillingly. And I get very disturbed because of that. And I do not know what to do. If I talk, I will fall into these ones; if I keep my silence, it will seem to me that I behave*

[817] In the Greek text it is used the word αλλοιούδθαι and not μεταμοφφόυσθαι, as in the Transfiguration of the Lord on Tabor. Blushing comes from the feeling that my body has escaped from under the power of the person. The blushing doesn't transfigure the body, while the Transfiguration of the Lord on Tabor was lived the elevation of the whole person, with the body, on a totally different plan. Max Scheller explained the feeling of shame by the fact that the man is not only body but spirit too. Without conscience the man wouldn't have any feeling of shame. The animal has no shame. The same comes when the man tends to show himself only as body, but the spirit protests. Adam and Eva felt no shame before committing the ancestral sin, for they didn't get their bodies out of the transfiguring power of the spirit. It is the conscience about "alienation", as the Greek term says, of falling form human. Olivier Clement sees in this the fact that the man gest ashamed in front of his fellow human, the appurtenance of the body to the person, and in the same time the difference between body and person: "I recognize myself, but in the same time I do not recognize myself. I recognize myself in my body, otherwise I wouldn't blush when I am gazed upon by somebody else; you do not blush form something foreign to you" (Olivier Clement, "Le corps", in *Bulletin du Centre Protestant d'Etudes*, Avril, 1982, p. 7). The same one reckons the "shame as affirmation of the person" (p. 28). I am body too, but I am not only body. The proof is that "the more the another gives himself, the more I discover him: the secret is the giving itself" (p. 30). Right in the act of the wedding "I promise in front of God to live and to die in order you to exist and you to exist forever" (p. 31).

inappropriately, especially to them who talk to me. What is this state, Father? Please help me with your holy prayers!

Answer: This happens to you because of the envy from the devil. This is because he doesn't want us or they who talk to us get any benefit, the devil brings this tare to us. In addition to that, the devil also wants to offend, if possible, them whom we talk to. But the fear of God is outside any disturbance and disorder and confusion. That's' why, before any meeting, let's arm ourselves up with the fear of God, and let's take heed at ourselves with much watchfulness, so that why will us get disturbed and why will us laugh at? This is for in the fear of God there is no laughter. That's why they say about the insane people that "in laughter they raise their voice" (Sirach 21: 23[818]). And the word of the insane ones is incoherent and without grace[819]. And they say about the righteous that he barely smiles (Sirach 21: 23[820]). So, if we bear within us the remembrance of God and the thought that we must preserve when meeting our brothers the humbleness and the peaceful cogitation and that we like to persevere in those and to have in front of our eyes "the fearsome judgment" of God[821], this state will banish away form within our heart any cunning thought. This is for, there where is peace, and gentleness, and humbleness, there dwells God[822]. Let's keep this when encountering other people.

And if the enemy insists in waging us war into these things, because of reckoning to catch us into the trap of his shamelessness, and so to topple us over, let's not allow us to be kidnapped. But, after the first attack, let's take heed at the

[818] In the KJB this book, called *The Wisdom of Joshua the Son of Sirach (The Ecclesiastes)* is not present, but it is given in the ROB. The interested reader can find this book in an English translation on www.academia.edu, together with the other thirteen books not given in the KJB, under the title: *Bible Missing Texts*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[819] Without that wisdom that provides the listener with pleasure, without the decency that is so cherished by our people there will be disorder.

[820] Vid supra. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[821] The author makes here, out of the thought at the "fearsome judgment" of God mentioned at the Holy Liturgy, a means for maintaining the wisdom and the restraint during the meetings with others. The eschatological opening of the Liturgy doesn't mean a disinterest for the present life, but it is a means for purifying the present life. The same effect of general cleaning of our life is provided also by the often remembrance of God.

[822] The feeling of the presence of the almighty God it gives the man power to control his agitation, his fear that is usually manifested in violence, and his arrogance when not knowing his true measures.

second attack, and to on. This is for it was written: The righteous falls for seven times a day, but he stands again" (Ps. 12: 6[823]). But standing up means fighting. Ane he who fights and he stand up again, until the end, he will show who he is[824]. But let's take care of calling upon the name of God in all of these. This is for there where God is, there will be all the good things[825]. But then is true that there where the devil is, there will be all the evil things[826]. And it is proven that if we speak in order us to be pleasant to the people, or with a disturbance in an evil manner, all of those come from the devil. Let's remember about Saint Apostle Paul who says: "Let your word always be with grace, and seasoned with salt" (Col. 4: 6). And if we persevere in these things, the All-Keeper God will give us, by His mercy, a consummate state, through His fear. Amen.

455. The question of the same one: Somebody invited someone among the Fathers to taste something at his place. But the Father didn't accept the invitation, saying that he cannot. Another only asked him to utter a prayer for him in his monastic cell. And when he entered his monastic cell, the Father forced him stay and eat. And because of the insistence he remained and ate. And by finding out that, him who invited that Father first, he go sad. Was his sadness according to God?

Answer: When somebody, because of a motif that seemingly is blessed and useful to the soul, he gets disturbed and he gets sad and he gets upset with his neighbor, it is obvious that this is not according to God. This is for all the things of God are peaceful and useful and they bring the man to

[823] In KJB we have: Ps. 12: 6: "The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times."; in ROB we have: Ps. 11: 6: "The words of the Lord, clean words, silver cleaned in fire, cleans od dirt, cleaned for seven times." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[824] He who hasn't fallen, he won't stand. Neither will stand him who has totally fallen. One's fight won't be a serious fight if he doesn't feel himself almost defeated. Only through many fights of this sort one gets strengthens to such an extent so that the temptation will not longer have power upon him.

[825] Calling upon the name of God means calling upon God Himself. And God comes when He is called, so that God Himself will be present if He is called upon. By and large, he who calls upon somebody's name and he who is called by somebody, they are in a relationship.

[826] The good and the evil things do not stand by themselves, but they are hypostatized, the first tones in God, the last one sin satan. And the things are spread out of them. And out of them the things get hypostatized, often mixed up, within the human persons too.

humbleness and to self-condemnation. This is for it is said: "The righteous accuses himself right from his first word" (Prov. 18: 16). He who seemingly wants something according to God but he is impeded by somebody, and because of that he condemns and gossips him who has impeded him, he shows by that that his thought from the beginning was not according to God. This is for it is was said: "Out of their fruits you will know them" (Mt. 7: 16). This is for him who has put in his mind something according to God, but he has been impeded to commit that, he rather humbles himself and he reckon himself as unworthy, and he reckons him who impeded him as being rather a prophet. So, if you summon somebody out of love to come into your monastic cell or if you ask something from somebody with faith[827] to give you something and he doesn't allow himself to be persuaded to give that to you, and another asking him the same thing, that one deigns to give him what he asked for, you won't allow the devil of the anger to trouble your soul[828]. This is because anything that is mixed with disturbance it isn't from God. That's why, by humbling yourself, you will rather say: "I have been found unworthy and God has showed my sins and my unworthiness to the Fathers". This is for "He Who gives grace, He gives it to the humble ones" (Prov. 3: 34). This is for him who has the humbleness, he will never want things from above him, but he always runs towards humbleness[829]. Think at the centurion who came to Jesus for his servant and he heard: "Coming, I will heal him", but he run to humbleness and told Jesus: "Lord, I am not worthy for you to enter under my cover" (Mt. 8: 5-13). Who won't let himself be kidnapped by such an honor? But the humbleness didn't search either this honor, because of reckoning itself an unworthy of it. And the knower-of-people God, He Who rejoices of the good will of the people, He praised the centurion's faith,

[827] Call Him with the faith that you will benefit of what you ask for.

[828] In the relationships between two men, they are not alone, but there is God too, or satan, according to the heart of one man or of both of them. Even when you ask somebody for something in good faith, and he has no evil thought against you, God could urge that one not to fulfill your request, who knows towards what benefit of yours. Anyway, it is the duty of each one not to allow the devil to trouble their relationship with the another.

[829] He who has humbleness he doesn't cherish at all the vanity of the worldly glory, for he has the richness and the depth of his life into God, as hidden into the humble vessel of his being, or in connection with himself.

saying: "In all Israel I haven't found such a faith"[830]. And thus, the centurion's humbleness brought him praise and the healing of his servant. This is for many are the gifts bestowed to the humbleness[831]. Let's run to humbleness, in order us to take the humbleness's grace and its praise from Jesus Christ Who humbled Himself to death (Phil. 2: 8), and so He gave Himself to us as an example of humbleness.

456. Question: Father, the centurion using his overwhelming humbleness, he reckoned himself unworthy of the coming of the Master in his house, and his faith was praised. But Abraham invited God into his tent and he bowed down before God, in the same time, down to the ground, despite he encountered Him as on a man, because of not knowing that He was the Master (Gen. 18: 1). Didn't have Abraham the humbleness, but the virtue of the centurion is bigger than that of Abraham? This is for the humbleness, as you always teach us, it is the most important virtue. Tell be, therefore, the meaning and the differences between the virtues of both of them. This is for one didn't accept the visit and he was praised, while the another asked for the visit powerfully and he was praised too.

Answer: Both of them were consummate in their faith in God, but they used their faith and their humbleness according to the moment. This is for Patriarch Abraham too, he said: "I am dust and ashes" (Gen. 18: 27). And by reckoning on himself thus, he showed that he didn't reckon himself worthy of receiving guests. But still, because he was consummate, he received any man, not making difference between sinners and saints. This is for, relatedly to him and to Lor it was said: "Do not disregard the receiving of guests. This is for, by doing that, some people accommodated, unknowingly, angels" (Hebr. 13: 2). So, if Abraham knew that that one was the Lord, Abraham would use the centurion's word. This is for there is not humbler deed than one to reckon himself as "dust and ashes". And the

[830] The humbleness is united with the faith. The centurion didn't reckon himself worthy of receiving Christ in his house, for he believed in Christ's godhead. And in his faith, by knowing Jesus as God, he had Jesus closer than they who would have received Jesus in their houses, but they wouldn't've known and felt His godhead.

[831] The thirsty deep of the humbleness attracts in itself many gifts, reckoning them superior to those which seem to the man that he has them through himself.

centurions used, according to that moment, his humbleness, by knowing that That One was the Savior. But we say that the centurion could have used also the desire for receiving Him as guest (Lev. 7: 4-5). This is for his faith is not lacking the deeds. Neither Christ praised an unworking faith. So, the centurion's faith had deeds too. And at the right moment for receiving guests the centurion would have used, at his turn, the Patriarch's invitation towards everybody. So, we find both of them as consummate.

457. Because I, as a sinner that I am, I haven't either the true and sincere humbleness which the centurion was praised for, or the receiving-of-guests love which Abraham was found worthy through, of accommodating God, what should I do? Should I, by looking at my unworthiness, to renounce to inviting holy people to visit me and so I to lose the benefit coming out of it? Or, should I rather run to them, but not with the desire of inviting them to my place, but as a sick in his soul one, and as one who needs healing? This is for it is characteristic to the sick ones to desire their healing and this one is not reckoned to them as receiving of guests; and if they do not invite these ones, they do not show themselves as having a humble cogitation but rather as being mindless. Teach me, therefore, Father, if it is good I to call the saints for I need them, or should I avoid their coming, as being I unworthy?

Answer: You can call them as one who is sick and who needs the doctor. Think at this, that the recently born child doesn't suddenly reach consummate man, but he crosses through the soft meal and then to hard food. This is for the hard food belongs to the consummate ones. That's why the Apostle too, he said: "I fed you with milk, not with food" (1 Cor. 3: 2). So, by receiving guests, let's not say that we fulfill a commandment, but let's say that we do that as ones who are sick, and for we need a doctor. And use them until God with take you to the consummate things[832].

[832] Let's not praise ever with anything of what we do. By receiving guests, let's not praise ourselves that by doing that we do good to those ones, but let's reckon ourselves as needing those ones, in order they to help us in our struggle with our passions. And, actually, we need the advice of those ones as long as we are non-consummate. After that, there will come other toils which we uphold through, our advanced state: especially the deepening into prayer.

458. Question: Which is the daring and the indecent laughter?

Answer: There is daring and daring. There is a daring (in word) because of shamelessness, and this daring is birth-giver to all evil things (Paterikon, Agathon: 1). And there is a daring out of gladness, and neither this one if too beneficial to the man. And for it is characteristic to the strong ones to avoid both of those sorts of daring, if, because of our weakness we cannot avoid both those sorts of daring, and so we use only that daring out of gladness, let's take heed not to offend our brother. This is because, they who are among people, they cannot escape this second sort of daring. So, if we cannot get rid of it, let's use it towards building and not towards offending. And let's do that especially when we force ourselves to shorten the speaking too. This is because the much-speaking is useless, even when seemingly occupies itself with useful things.

Regarding the laughter, it has the same meaning. This is because the laughter is the fruit of the daring. This is for, if somebody has the daring of the shameless speaking, he will have his laughter shameless too. And if one has the daring of the gladness, by that will be born within him the glad laughter. And as it was said about daring, likewise, one must not tarry of to overflow himself into its laughter either. But let him tighten his cogitation and utter his word decently. This is because they who overflow them in it, let all of them know that they will fall into fornication too.

459. Question: Please, Father, tell me how far can go the appropriate gladness? And how can the sinner benefit of it, in order him not to cross over his measures?

Answer: The consummate ones take heed at themselves consummately, like the craftsman who know his craftsmanship consummately. This is for, if it happens to him to entertain some people while he is working, the dialogue with those ones won't impede him from accomplishing the due things required by his trade. And by continuously talking to the present ones, the whole his mind pays attention to the work of his trade.

Likewise, him who talk to some people, he must show his face and his word as being glad; but his inward cogitation must sigh[833]. This is for about this it was written: "The sigh of my heart is always before You" (Ps. 37: 9[834]). So, as the unskilled craftsman, if he talks while working, he will endanger the things of his craftsmanship, likewise is him who uses the gladness. He must make sure, carefully, by taking heed at his words and at the gladness of his gaze, lest he will totally deviate from the way of his (internal) crying. So, one like this, before starting to talk to somebody, he must ask his thought what he should do and he must prepare himself so. This is for it was written: "I prepared myself and I was not disturbed" (Ps. 118: 60[835]). And preparing oneself means: discerning among people in order to find out why they want to talk to us, and preparing our thinking in the fear of God, according to the purpose of him who comes to talk to us. If somebody comes out of friendship, let's use pleasant words; if we are to receive Fathers, lets' do that with gladness, as Abrahan did, for he washed up the feet of the Master and of the angels and he welcomed them with joyful words. In each of these cases the circumstance will tell us how should we show our gladness. When we may invite them who come sot us, to have something to eat or to drink, let's do that with gladness, but keeping that one under guard, so that our cogitation won't get disturbed.

460. Question (Codex Vatopedi 2, Sinai 430, and Cutlumuş 3). A brother asked the same Oldman: Who is mastered by vain-glory and who is mastered by pride? And how does one reach to pride?

[833] It is not about a duplicity here. This is for, he who smiles to another while working his trade, he makes shine on his face the attentive thought at his work. One can see that he is not surrendered with his exterior totally to entertain others. One can see in his entertainment his "spirituality".

[834] In KJB we have: Ps. 38: 10: "Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee."; in ROB we have: Ps. 37: 10: "Lord, before You is all my desire and my sigh hasn't been hidden from You." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[835] In KJB we have: Ps. 119: 60: "I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments."; in Rob we have: Ps. 118: 60: "I was ready and I didn't get disturbed from keeping your commandments." (E. l. t.'s n.)

Answer: Out of the desire for being pleasant to people one can reach to vain-glory; and by growing up into vain-glory, one can reach to pride. Forgive me, brother, and pray for me[836].

461. A brother asked the Great Oldman (Vatopedi 2, Sinai 410, Cutlumuş 3): question: Tell me, Father, if the pricking (the repentance) I have it is true and if I must live alone? And pray for me, for I am harassed by the body's war.

Answer: Brother, the crying and the repentance which you have now, they are not true, but the go and come. This is because the true crying intertwined with the pricking of the heart it is a servant of the man, obeying the man and unseparated from the man. And him who has that crying he won't be defeated by any war. The true crying erases the mistakes from the beginning and he washed up all the stains. The true crying ceaselessly guards, with the name of God, on him who has achieved the true crying and it banishes away the laughter and the scattering and it upholds the ceaseless sadness. This is for the true crying is a shield deflecting all the devil's arrows. He who was the true crying won't be touched by any blow during any war, either against man or against debauched women. This is for the true crying is together with us and it fights on our side. So, I have shown to you the sign of the weakness and of the valiance. But you must not reckon that God couldn't ease your war. This is that that could happen, especially for the saints who are praying for you[837]. But by

[836] Somebody's vain-glory still is depending on others. The pride can exist even without the praise coming from others. The pride feeds only on one's imagination about himself, thought the imagination about the self is present also in the joy of somebody for the glory granted him by others.

[837] We are never alone while fighting the temptations and while enduring the trials. The love from God and form the saints irradiates towards us and within us, and it strengthen us. Doesn't the mothers' love send its strengthening waves towards her son who is in troubles, even though her son won't feel that? The more consummate one is, the less egotistic he will be, and the more sensitive he will be at the another's difficulties, at the more merciful he will be. But God is consummate and the saints are partakers to His consummation. And God if even more impressed by our hardships when He sees the love of the saints for us. The love no longer keeps separate them who love one another, neither from one another, nor form the third one who they love. This has its foundation in the Holy Trinity. There is love within world due to the fact that there are superior personal centers of love where the love irradiates from, because the love cannot stand by itself. And if we are thirsty for reaching a consummate love,

loving you, God wants to strengthen you through many wars and toils, in order you to reach the measure of the well-experienced virtue, but you won't reach those if you do not guard all the things commanded to you through letters, by me the loving-of-vain-glory teacher of yours. Regarding the living alone, that means power. When the time will be right, I will send you a word about it, at my initiative. For now, you must work, son, as I have told you. And I believe that you will advance into Christ. Do not fear. May the Lord be with you. Amen.

462. Of the same man towards the other Oldman: "Please, Abba Master, pray for me, in order the Lord to give me a little humbleness. And because the Fathers say that if one doesn't pluck of from within himself the root of his passions, he will fall again, due to whatever reason, in those passions, how can one pluck out from within himself the root of his belly's covetousness and the root of his love for money? And because the Great Oldman told me that my present crying isn't a true crying, because of going and coming, what is the state of my soul because of that this thing happens to me? And should I force myself towards the consummate crying, or should I wait for it until the true pricking (repentance) will come?

The answer of John: Brother, God gives us humbleness, but we reject it. And we say again: pray to God for Him to give us the humbleness. The humbleness consists of cutting off in all things our own will, and it consists of being worriless in all the things, regarding the cutting off of our passions, by cutting off our will and by striving to the extent we are able to, and by forcing our senses to guard they order, by not using our senses in an evil manner, so that we will pluck off not only the root of our passion mentioned by you, but also of all the other passions[838].

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that means that there is a persona Center (or better said tri-personal), out of which there ceaselessly flows that love that attracts us.

[838] The will manifested in passions is a weak will, it is an enslaved will. You will must be cut off by the higher will, by the true will, which we can truly become masters upon ourselves through. That's why only through it we must liberate ourselves from the slavery of the passions.

And the coming and the going of the present crying, it has as its cause the successive warming up and the chilling down of your thought. When the warmth will persist, it will become big your steadfastness and your repentance (pricking of the heart) too, and to that it will follow the true crying. Therefore, you owe to take care of this ones as well, by forcing yourself to make that crying coming to you[839].

Brother, do not despise the guarding of the words and of the commandments give to you by the Great Oldman, and you will be saved. I much-spoken myself, brother, but not out of the work I am committing, neither from the Ghost, and I believe that all the things told you by the Great Oldman, he told you those for he previously fulfilled them himself, and those are from the Holy Ghost[840]. Still, my conscience bears witness to me that I do not want to delude you in any way. That's why I thing that neither my words or my advices will harm you. God too know this. And I want to be of help to you, for you ask and for you want to be saved, if the Lord strengthens me. "May God vine you help from Zion, so that you to see on all the days of your life the goods of Jerusalem" (Ps. 127: 5[841]). Pray for me, brother.

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[839] One must notice that the crying comes to us after we have been liberated form passions. The passions make our soul callous. But our passions can also produce a crying when they cannot be satisfied. On one hand we must become strong, by liberating ourselves form the slavery of the passions. On the other hand, this strength will bring to us the softening of our heart and the crying. How can this be explained? This strength is born not only out of the victory of our true will, but also from the love from God and for our sorrow felt because of our sins. The strength and the affection for God go hand in hand. The strength of the mother in overcoming her egotism, and her affectionate love ready to do any sacrifice for her son, they constitute an example of such a union between those. The egotist cannot cry for another, but he cries only for himself. The egotist cannot cry for another because of being himself defeated by his passions. there is also a crying at the egotist, but that is a crying united with the rigid savageness.

[840] The Ghost doesn't come over him who hasn't cleaned himself, by personal effort, of his egotistic passions. The Ghost descended at Pentecost over the Apostles who have been prepared during three previous years by the Savior, so that they to believe in Him and they to love Him. To some extent, the Ghost also comes when someone starts a new life, in order the Ghost to help him to advance in that new life. On Pentecost, the Ghost produced the pricking of the heart of those who believed the Apostles' word. On this purpose it is given the Ghost at Baptism as well. But the Ghost Who gives power to the Apostles is given especially through the non-egotistic doing. The theatrical Pentecostalism isn't something serious.

[841] In KJB we have: Ps. 128: 5: "The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life."; in ROB we have: Ps. 127: 5: "You will be blessed by the Lord from Zion and you will see the goods of Jerusalem on all the days of your life." (E. l. t.'s n.)

463. Question: One who loves Christ asked the same Oldman if he should discuss much about the Holy Mysteries? And if the sinner came close to the Holy Mysteries, would him be condemned as an unworthy?

Answer: Coming close to the Holy Mysteries, take heed, while receiving the body and the blood of Christ, at reckoning them as real, without any doubt. You must believe Him Who said: "Take, eat, this is My body and My blood", and you must believe that those have been given to us towards the forgiveness of our sins. Him who believes such, we hope he won't be condemned. And him who doesn't believe, he has already been condemned (Jn. 3: 18). So, do not impede yourself from coming close to the Holy Mysteries, because of reckoning on yourself as a sinner, but you must believe that the sinner who comes close to the Savior, he will be found worthy of being his sins forgiven, as we can see in the Scripture that they who came close to Him with faith, they heard the voice of God who told them: "Be forgiven to you your many sins" (Lk. 7: 47-48). He who was worthy of coming close to Him, he wouldn't have sin. But because he was sinner and debtor, he received the forgiveness of his debts. But you must also listen to the Lord Who says: "I haven't come to save the righteous, but the sinners" (Mt. 9: 13); and again: "Not the healthy ones need the doctor, but the sick" (Lk. 5: 31). So, reckon yourself as sinner and sick and come close to Him Who can save the lost one (Lk. 19: 10[842]).

[842] One who said that he is sinless, right by saying so he would be a sinner. The man must always be aware of his sinfulness. But this doesn't mean that the man must not pray to all his acquaintances for forgiveness, but he must do that especially to God, through the priest ordained through ordination to forgive the confessed sins. And can one tell that he is consummately clean of any sin? And how could one dare to say that? I can tell, about being my sins forgiven by the priest, that I have been forgiven, but have I been able to make a complete confession so that I have removed from me any impulse towards other sins?

When you come close to Eucharist, the main thing is you to believe in the real presence of the body and of the blood of our Lord in that Eucharist, and you to believe that you are sinner, but you must have been also fighting on all ways against the sins and for getting yourself cleaned of your sins. Namely you won't come as one who accepts, with indifference, his state as sinner.

464. Of the same one towards the same one: Master, how did our Savior allow Judah to be imparted with the Last Supper? This is for Jaint John Chrysostom in his interpretation given to the Gospel according to Matthew, he says: "The unworthy must be stopped from the fearsome table of the Mystery" (G.P. 58: 743). And Saint Paul declares one like this as submitted to the judgment (1 Cor. 11: 27-28). By this, he doesn't allow him who is aware of is sins to dare to come close to the fearsome Mystery and to be imparted with that life that spring out of the Mystery. So, what should I do? This is because this thought disturbs much me the sinner?

Answer: In order Him to show His great love for people, and in order Him to show that He endures the man to the last man's breath, in order the man to repent and to be alive, God washed Judah's feet and He allowed Judah to be imparted with His Mysteries, in order Judah to take away any defense[843] form Judah and from those who always tall that if He didn't allowed Judah to enjoy those, Judah wouldn't have been lost. So, he condemned on himself and it has been the word of the Apostle: "And if the unbeliever wants to separate himself, let him separate himself" (1 Cor. 7: 15), and this word regards both the sinners and them who do not repent. And if Saint John stopes them, he does that for teaching and for rebuking, by drawing their attention on the judgment and on the eternal torment. This is for he didn't say that he forcedly rejects those, neither that he cut them off from the Church. This is for neither Jesus did that to Judah. And if they remain in their sins, and if they come close shamelessly, they condemn on themselves by separating themselves from the glory of God.

And on those sinners who come close to the Holy Mysteries as some wounded people and as ones asking for mercy, the Lord will make them worthy of His Mysteries. This is for our Lord said: "I haven't come to call the righteous, but the sinners to repentance" (Lk. 5: 32). And again: Not the healthy ones need the doctor, but the sick" (Lk. 5: 31). But I am telling you again that what Saint John said, that by impeding the sinners from the Holy Mysteries, he heralded them their damnation. This is for "him who eats and drink unworthily, he

[843] At note, in Volos Edition, it is said that some of the Fathers said that Judah have been imparted, while others told the opposite.

eats and drinks judgment to himself" (1 Cor. 11: 29). And one like this is throw outside the Church of God[844]. This is because he hasn't taken except the judgment. That's why Saint John didn't say to be those cut off (from the Holy Impartation), but he said to let them give the decision to themselves. On the other hand, no one must say that he is worthy of the Holy Impartation, but we must say: "I am unworthy and I believe that I will be sanctified if I am imparted". And this will be him according to his faith, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Who it is due the glory forever. Amen.

465. Question: When Judah said: "I have sinned, because I have sold innocent blood" and he threw away the silver coins (Mt. 27: 5), didn't he repent" (in Codex Vatopedi 2, Sinai 410, Cutlumuş 3, and Pantelimon 192 it is added here that this question belonged to Abba Elien, while actually this question belonged to one who loved Christ).

Answer: It had been repentance if he would have gone to our Lord to ask Him for forgiveness. This is for it was said: "Go, in the first place, and reconcile yourself with your brother" (Mt. 5: 24); you must reconcile with him whom you have mistaken to, and not with somebody else. But Judah did something even worse[845]. This was because, by going, he killed himself because of his despair and that's why he was not accepted back again.

[844] So, one received his salvation because he wills it, and he rejects his salvation because he wants to reject it. He who comes close to the holy body and blood while feeling sorrow for his sins, he will be saved, while him who comes close with indifference or despise, he will be condemned.

[845] Asking for forgiveness to him whom you have done something wrong it is more difficult than telling your sin to somebody else. But the forgiveness which you are asking from comes from him and it places you again in an affectionate communication with him. This is for, by humiliating yourself in front of him, he will see you exiting the enmity you have with him. But, as long as the asking for forgiveness is the sign of a repentance that melts down your heart and by it you prove to the another that and you believe that he can be softened too, the despair leads to suicide and to a definitive callousness, because of not thinking that the another and God Himself can get softened to their heart anymore. The despair is a faithlessness into God's love and into the capacity of love of the fellow humans.

466. Question: Master, please tell me: what the will of God and His lenience are about? And which is the consequence of one and of another?

Answer: When it comes to you a happening causing you trouble, you must examine your thought if it reproaches you something for the things happening to you. And if your thought doesn't reproach anything to you, you will know that that happening has come to you to test you. And this is the will of God. But if you find out that your thought reproaches something to you, related to that happening, your trouble has come to you by the lenience of God towards correcting you (through rebuking). But both of those are useful to the man.

467. It is good, as you have taught me, to surrender ourselves to the will of God. This guards the man undisturbed. But when somebody who is weak as I am, he sees a thing on the way of not succeeding, he will either get disturbed or, if he shows patience, he will repent by thinking that that thing hasn't come to success because of his patience. Which oen of these two os the best? And how can that one to correct himself? And how must one reckon that somebody can get rid of disturbance?

Answer: The Lord said: "rejoice when you fall in diverse of temptations" (Jas. 1: 2). Among the diverse temptations which the man must rejoice of, there is this one too: If he is weak and he has no patience, so that he cannot rejoice of the unsuccess of a thing and to surrender himself to the will of God, he firstly must fight the disturbance, saying to himself: "Take heed and do not get disturbed". And if it is the will of God that that thing to succeed, that thing will succeed. So, anything happened, you should accept that with thankfulness. This is because no good things get accomplished through our efforts, by by the power and by the will of God. Still, God asks for our endeavor according to God, and not for our endeavor that would be instilled by some cunningness or lie, because these ones belong to the evil one.

468. Question: When many defiled thoughts rise up within me, and I fear to surrender to certain one among those, what should I do?

Answer: You must tell God: "Master, forgive me everything that I think against Your will, either knowingly, or unknowingly. For Your it is the mercy forever. Amen".

469. Question: It is good or not, us to always tell the beautiful stories form the Scripture and form the lives of the Fathers?

Answer: Everyone know that the honey is sweet. And it is not unknow also the word from the Proverbs: "If you find honey, eat as much as you need, lest by getting satiated of it you will throw it up (vomit)" (Prov. 29: 16). There are sacks and sacks. There is a sack containing fifty kilos, while other sack can contain three times more. So, one cannot force the fifty kilos sack to contain three times more. Here too it is likewise. We cannot make all the people equal. This is for one can speak without getting hurt, while another cannot do so. Therefore, the silence if better and more beautiful than everything. And the silence was honored and embraced by the Fathers, and through it they gained their glory. This is for, by showing its beauty and the damnation coming out of speaking, Job said: "I will put my finger on my mouth" (Gen. 39: 34). And before him, Patriarch Abraham, after uttering those beautiful asks, he said: "I am dust and ashes" and: "I fear that something will happen to me, Lord, if a continue speaking" (Gen. 18: 27, 32), and he showed his silence after that.

But, because of our weakness we haven't reached yet to walk on the consummate way of those ones, let's speak out the things helping us to get built up, form the "Word of the Fathers" and let's not throw ourselves to telling the stories from the Scriptures. This is because such a thing is dangerous to the nescient. This is for those things were told in spiritual manner. And he who is bodily he cannot discern the spiritual aspects (1 Cor. 2: 15). And it was aid: "The letter kills, and the Ghost makes alive" (2 Cor. 3: 6). Let's therefore run to the word of the Fathers, and we will find the benefit in them. And let's these ones too, to be spoken briefly, because of remembering him who

said: "Out of much-speaking the sin won't be absent" (Prov. 10: 19). And even though our thought tells us that those word and those stories are beautiful, let's remember that ourselves are not workers of the uttered things, and let's reckon that even thought we build up others by uttering those things, we will get condemned even more, by not doing that what we say[846]. But let not this impede us from discussing about the godlike things. This is for it is more beneficial to us to discuss about those than to discuss useless things. But, in order us not to fall into haughtiness, or into the thought of praising ourselves, we must reckon ourselves as we actually are, as non-fulfillers of the things uttered by us, and therefore as ones who utter those things towards our condemnation. But both for these mistakes and for other mistakes, let's pray God: "Do not judge me for I have uttered these things".

470. There are some neutral things, neither sinful nor useful, as for instance the agitation from the town, of the peace from the town, or the town's good prosperity, of the wars, or some other things similar to these ones. Is it useless to talk about such things?

Answer: If it is more useful to keep our silence even about the good things, all the more will we do that regarding the neutral things. But if we cannot keep our silence, but we are overcome by our desire for speaking, let's not tarry in discussing about those things, lets we fall, because of our much-speaking, into the trap of our enemy[847].

[846] We will be even more condemned if other become workers what we said, because that fact proves that those things can be fulfilled by people, and despite we know those things better we do not fulfill them with our deeds. We remain exterior to the things we utter, and by doing so we will be liars. Blessed are those, who do not allow themselves to be influenced by the example of the liars, but by defending the possibility of fulfilling the words even against those who utter them as liars, they fulfill those words.

[847] We have had experienced often the fact that our discussions have enslaved us only to the demons because of the sins we have been committing during those discussions, because of saying something unpleasant to the participant to those discussions, or to those who have been absent but other told them about our sayings.

Question: Because of many times the neutral things lead me to much-speaking, which I am not able to avoid sinning, what should I do?

Answer: Let's keep the measure thus: if we know that we have spoken once, because of being us defeated by some thought, if possible, let's stop ourselves for the second time, and let's be prepared for the third time. And thus, let's prepare ourselves for stopping ourselves form all the following discussion. This is for, if the number of the discussion reaches ten if somebody has been defeated in nine of those, but he has stopped from one discussion, he will have reached better than him who has fallen into all ten discussions.

472. Question: If I am in the presence of some people who talk about something bodily or spiritually, what should I do? Will I speak or not?

Answer: If you have reached at a meeting with some people speaking about something worldly or spiritual, give them the appearance that you too say something, but say something that won't bring any harm to the soul. But take care of avoiding their praises. And do this in order they not to reckon you as silent, and you to have some burdening out of that[848]. But by doing so, you must take heed at speaking only a few words, so that not to offend those by speaking many words. This is because you do not know if the sole word uttered by you, it won't burden you more than those will be because of their many words.

473. Question: Where does it come to me from, the fact that I speak to somebody about something, with disturbance, and that, though I repent, I fell again, willingly, in the same mistake? Then, I am also troubled by my idleness (acedia).

[848] If you gave them the impression that you willingly keep your silence, those ones could reckon you as proud and as offending them intentionally. Be so humble than to hide even your humbleness.

Answer: This comes out of the fact that we do not have our heart into work[849]. That's why we fall also in idleness and in many other evil things.

474. Question: The Great Oldman said that if somebody feels disturbance in his thought, even up to the third time, that one will come from the evil one. Please explain me that!

Answer: If you think at something and if you see a disturbance in your thought and, by calling upon the name of God even for three times, that disturbance persists, you will understand that that thing is from the evil one and you won't do that thing[850]. And if, only after you have decided to do that thing, there will be born a disturbance and your thought will be overcome by that disturbance, neither then will be indifferent that what you have decided to do[851]. This is for nothing will be pleasant to God if it has disturbance within. And if somebody resists the disturbance[852], he must not necessarily reckon that thing as harmful, but let him examine if that thing is good or bad. And if that thing is good, he must not renounce to it. And if he sees that that thing is good, let him do that thing, while despising his disturbance by the help from God.

475. Question: It happens to me to start a discussion with somebody and after I have started that dialogue, there it comes the disturbance. What should I do? This is because if I stop myself to examine the word, as you told me, in order I to see whether that word if good of bad, I will be despised by them who listen to me, for I keep my silence.

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[849] The disturbance put into discussion come from not having the remembrance of God or of Christ within our heart, from not being focused into you while you are speaking, or focused on thinking at your sins and at your duty to humble yourself. From here comes the passion (the disturbance) manifested in discussion. We reckon too important the things said by us and we think about ourselves of being too important as it would depend on us for the truth to be known.

[850] You will understand if you do that thing with pleasure, with covetousness, and with passion.

[851] In the first case the disturbance appears even united with the thought; in the second case the disturbance appears after the thought.

[852] So, he is not totally taking into mastery by his disturbance.

Answer: If it is not obvious to you that that word is sinful, you will bring that word to its end. And after that you will examine whether you have spoken wrongly. And if you find out that yes, you will punish your thought of having spoken, as one who have spoken wrongly, in order you not longer to do that. This is for it was written: "My son, you have sinned, do not do that anymore" (Sirach[853] 21: 1). And take heed not at cogitating that the uttered things are uttered towards good; and only after that you will accept the dialogue. And if it is obvious to you that the word is sinful, then you will force yourself to cut that word off, even though there will occur some disturbance, either by pretending that you have forgotten, or by moving the word to other more useful content, in order you not to fall in the condemnation tied to that bad word[854].

476. Question: You said, Father, that before staring the discussion I must examine my thought. But what should I do when the need requires me to tell that word, or when I am in the middle of a discussion, so that I won't seem that I will have locked myself up in my silence, but that I want to tell myself something about the discussed things, especially when I do not notice any obvious sin in that word, but that word seems to me as good, or neither good nor bad? What do you command me to do, once I have no time to fully discern if there is some sin in that word?

Answer: If that word seems good to you, or it seems at leas neither good nor bad, and the need requires you to tell it, you will tell that word, except in case that you see that out of that word comes some vain-glory to you, or if you intuit that those who listen to you will praise you somehow. In this case you must convince your thought not to receive the vain-glory. But if you see that the vain-glory defeats you, it will be better to

[853] In the KJB this book, called *The Wisdom of Joshua the Son of Sirach (The Ecclesiastes)* is not present, but it is given in the ROB. The interested reader can find this book in an English translation on www.academia.edu, together with the other thirteen books not given in the KJB, under the title: *Bible Missing Texts*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[854] The disturbance is caused by the vain-glory or by the sin associated to the word you tell, or to the deed you commit. That's why, there where is disturbance, there won't be God, or you feel that you are not in state of peace with God. This is for God is the source of the peace, for He wants to keep everyone in the union conditioned by the humbleness of everybody.

you rather to keep your silence, than you to be hurt by vain-glory.

477. Question: You showed me, Father, how the things dome with disturbance or out of vain-glory are from the devils. And I thank the Lord Who have enlightened me through your spiritual teaching and Who destined to us who are sinners, to meet saints on the way of our life. But I pray you to teach me this thing too: what is the self-justification?

Answer: The self-justification is the deed that is not worthy to be praised, because it denies the sin, as we can wee at Adam, at Eva, at Cain, and at them who resemble those. This is because, by sinning and by wanting to justify themselves, they denied their sin[855].

478. Question: It happens sometimes that a thought not only that brings me disturbance, but it even pushed me to do or to say something. But is happened also that, on the opposite, that thought impedes me to finish my word or the thing, or that thought opposed me when I want to interrupt what I say or what I do. What should I do in such cases?

Answer: I told you before that one must examine every word and thing if it is good or bad. Let this make us despise all the other things. This is for, if it is good, you will go it. And if it is not good, you won't do it. But in order not to do that what is good with disturbance, you must examine your thought that urges you, regarding the reason why your thought urging you to that. And if you examine that thought with the fear of God, God won't let you go astray. This is for how could God allow you to go astray when Himself swore off, saying: "I am alive, says the Lord, I do not want the death of the sinner but I want him to

[855] To the self-justification, Saint Apostle Paul opposed the justification through God, a justification coming out of the faith into God, and not out of oneself. But waiting for the justification form God and not from oneself, it implies the humbleness. And in the same time with the humbleness, it implies also the thought of not reckoning oneself as justified through his faith. In this sense, the justification is a hope, and not a full-of-pride sureness. Somebody is justified when he doesn't reckon himself justified yet, not even by God as in case of the Lutheranism. This is because he always feels himself as sinner.

turn back and to be alive" (Ezek. 18: 23)? God won't let you, especially when seeing you examining your thought regarding the salvation of your soul and the tuning back towards Him. So, you must call God's name in everything.

479. Question: It happens to me, sometimes, that I call the name of God and it still remain in my thought a heaviness in this regard. Therefore, for how many times should I call Him?

Answer: It will suffice to you calling God's name once, and trice, but not more. And if that heaviness persists, you will overlook it. This is because that heaviness comes from the devils. And I say this for the case which nothing impeded you in, from speaking or from doing that thing, for that thing is good or neutral. Then it will suffice if you call the name of God once, or at most trice[856].

480. Question: When I want to tell or to do a good thing, and, because I fear not to be born within me some disturbance[857] because of that, I renounce to that, will I be right or wrong?

Answer: When you have to do or to tell something, but you fear lest out of that will be moved within you some disturbance, and that's why you renounce to it, you won't be right. This is because you entice the enemy (you don't confront the enemy) and so you won't get rid of your disturbance. This is because the enemy won't stop giving birth within you to disturbance regarding anything, and so your passion will become even worse. But if you do that thing with prayer and by the fear of God, the help from God will bring your disturbance to an end[858].

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[856] One must ceaselessly call upon the name of God, but it will suffice doing that trice, in order to speak or to do something good or neutral.

[857] The disturbance which he says about, that it could be born on each time he in on the way to tell or to do something, it is the vain-glory.

[858] When you do not want to say or to do something because of fearing the temptation, you will tell or accomplish that thing with prayer and with the fear of God, rather than to avoid telling of doing that because of fearing your vain-glory.

481. Question: You told me, Father, that the silence is good. On the other hand, if I use the silence I will seem as running away, and therefore I will be hurt. How can I understand this?

Answer: When you keep your silence due to your ascesis, then the silence is good. But when you do not keep your silence due to that, but because you fear the disturbance, you silence is harmful[859].

482. Question: For God made the man free and for God doesn't force the man to do that what is right, tell me, Father, how does God help him whom an injustice is done to? And what it was said like: "The Lord scatters the thoughts of the peoples and He rejects the advices of the rulers" (Ps. 32: 10[860])? And pray for I to me delivered from the devilish faithlessness and for I to cherish your spiritual teaching.

God doesn't force the man to do that what is right, because of the man's freedom. But when the man is sometimes is wronged and the man is worthy fop being delivered form injustice, God impeded him who does the injustice sand God doesn't count this to him towards righteousness, because of the bad decision and because he decided to commit injustice[861].

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[859] Each deed can be good of bad. It depends on the circumstances. The decision to do or not to do a deed. It must be made with right-reckoning. When you keep your silence in order you to make an effort for spiritual growth, that is a good silence. But when you keep your silence because of fearing your vain-glory, and that is not beneficial to somebody, that it is not good.

[860] In KJB we have: Ps. 33: 10: "The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect."; in ROB we have: Ps. 32: 10: "The Lord scatters the counsels of the gentiles, and He rejects the thoughts of the peoples and He defames the advices of the chieftains.

[861] God doesn't force the man to do the good, for God respects the freedom given by Him to the man; this is for God hasn't created the man as an object. But God punishes the man when the man used his freedom wrongly, or God makes the man suffer in order the man to correct himself in using his freedom rightly. That's why God allows the man to do injustices for a long period of time, but God helps in a certain way those whom one commits injustice to, by giving them satisfactions, or by delivering them from the injustice done to them, but only if they are worthy of that. And thus, they who make them suffer, they serve a punishment tools, and therefore, maybe, for their straightening. Thus, by wrongly using their freedom, the people harm each other, but they also are helped by that to correct themselves, if they want to. This is because not God Himself punishes them and corrects them through punishment, but God uses themselves to do that. Namely, God not only uses their rightly-used freedom, but he

Thus, the Chaldeans did injustice to them who were around Azariah, by throwing them into the oven of fire, but because those were worthy of being delivered, God spared them and God impeded the fire from doing the injustice, but we do not attribute to the Chaldeans the justice done to them, once the Chaldean will was evil, but we attribute the justice to God Who scattered the counsels of the peoples for them who fear Him. This is because, even if the evil is impeded to be done to the good ones, the unjust ones will take their payment for the evilness of the injustice they did. Take heed not to get astray from the truth which God of the glory leads you to, through the prayers of the saints. Amen.

483. Question: A brother who worked together with another brother, he was hit by that brother, through the work of the devil. And he was disturbed because of that, so that he wanted to no longer work in common with the brother who hit him, and he asked the Great Oldman about that.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, regarding that what you have asked me about, I am telling you not to get disturbed so that you to do something with disturbance, especially regarding a man who is himself disturbed by his thoughts and by the envy form the devil, as you to were tempted and infuriated on those moments, by your thoughts. This is for, if you recall what you have suffered like, back then, you won't despise you brother because of the temptation he suffered. This is for many ill people, by the pilling up of their blood to their brain, by a fiery fever, they thing and they speak unknowingly; and they even curse the healthy persons who take care of them. This is for they are mastered by their illness, as it happened in your case too. And if somebody tells to that ill man, the ill man will refuse the medicine. This is because the ill man doesn't know what is useful to himself. The ill man reckons as insanity the things told him by somebody and he swears and he gets angry and he asks for harmful or good foods, but he doesn't know that what he does. It is likewise with the tempted one. Even if he loses his soul, he won't know. Even if he swears and

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also uses their wrongly used freedom. In a way, God limits the evil through the evil itself. But in hell there won't come any good in anyone, and the evil will be endless.

despises the saints who suffer together with him for his soul, he won't know. This is because he has become callous in the illness coming to him form the enemy that always turn his things upside down, until the enemy makes him deny God Himself. It is so in this case too. But by knowing this, God doesn't allow us, out of oikonomia, to show us to Him unproven, by bearing our neighbor at the time of his felt and spiritual helplessness. This is for he said: "Bear you burdens to one another and so you will fulfill the law of God" (Gal. 6: 2). So, if somebody wants to help an ill man, this doesn't consist of doing that ill man's will and of giving to the ill man the things harmful to him, but it consists of bearing the ill man's curses and in taking care of not giving something harmful to the ill man[862]. So, you should do alike this time too. Not in fulfilling the will of the ill one consists care for him of, but it consists of praying for him. And if you cannot do that, you will ask them who can do it, in order they to ask from God to deliver him from the temptation coming to him from the enemy. And by doing so, you will be like Martha and Mary, the sisters of Lazarus, who begged the Lord to resurrect their brother. And if somebody does this, let him not think anything big about himself. This is because he does for that one that what others do for himself[863]. "This is for with the measure you measure with, it will be measured to you" (Lk. 6: 38)[864]. And you must not reckon that if

[862] You must the mockeries of the ill man who asks you for thing which can harm him, and you must not to answer alike. This is because the opposite will make him even more ill. You must be gentle to the sick, but you must not fulfill his inappropriate lusts by you doing his ill will.

[863] All of us need to be suffered by others. That's why is not the case for reckoning that we do something big when suffering another and when praying for him. Do not take pride when you have done good to others, for God has done good to you too, through others, and you have done good to others through God too. But do not get pride either when you have suffered something from others, for the Lord too suffered form others and by that He wanted to heal them up. So, the Lord is the One suffering within you. When you suffer from another and you don't answer him alike, the Lord will heal him up through you. The Lord uses us when we do good things, and He is the One suffering when we suffer without riposte from others, in order us to be healed up. The Lord of the skies and of the earth, by suffering the beatings from others, but without answering them alike, He showed that the true glory consists of enduring the hits from others, in order they to be healed through the example of the supreme love. We usually do differently: the more important we are, the less we endure the hits from others. This shows that what we reckon as glory, it is not a true glory, for it cannot heal.

[864] When you do something good to somebody else, you do not do else but paying for the good done to you by others. And Him Who does the good through people is God. God wants to catch us, by that, as active agents in the circuit of the good among us. This is for, only by engaging us too in the good which God want to do, He makes us too as kind.

you have been hit by somebody else, you have suffered such a big deal. This is because Himself the Lord of the sky and of the earth has bene hit. And all the following things. Do not allow yourself to be budged and so you to move away from your place and part with your brother. This is because such a thing won't be according to God, but it will be the fulfillment of the devil's will. And if you do this, you still won't find rest, but it will be even worse to you. This is because out of evil there comes not good. And this is disobedience and non-sapience. "This is because, there where is strive and quarrel, there is disorder and any bad thing" (Jas. 3: 16). No one ever get healed up through these. But only him who cuts off his will and who fight for not spying his neighbor, neither he ever says his neighbor: "What is this or that?". And he who says: "I want this too", he makes himself son of the devil and a stranger to God. This is because it is obvious that he wants to do his will and not the will of God[865]. Encourage yourself, brother, and God will shelter you. And pray for your brother with the whole your soul and love him into Christ Jesus our Lord Who it is due the glory forever. Amen.

484. Ask: A brother asked the same Great Oldman to pray for him, saying: forgive me for hindering you so much. But I believe in God that through your prayers I will be strengthened and I will no longer bother you so much.

The answer of Barsanuphius: All of them who are sons of God, they are, doubtlessly, also inheritors of the goodness, of the patience, or the mercy, of the love for people, and of the love for God. This is for, if they are sons of God, they will be goods too[866]. And God is light and they are lighteners. So, if God is

[865] He who fulfills his will he fulfills the will of the devil and he becomes the devil's son. This is because an own will that is not one with the will of God, it is one with the devil's will. Properly-said, the man's true will coincides to God's will. By this the man tears down the wall between him and God. On the opposite, the mans own will separates the man from God and form other people. The true will of the man is the one uniting the man with God and with his fellow humans. This is for God created all the people for the union with Himself and into Himself. This is the strong will of the man: not allowing his will to be dragged away by his egotistic passions which separate him form God and which loke the man up into his egotism.

[866] They are masters over themselves, non-enslaved to the passions, they are free, and in this they meet God in a unique freedom of the love. Theya re then good too, because only the weak ones fear other people, because they are evil. The do not breath in the fearless width of

bothered and burdened when prayed, that will happen to them too. And if God gets sad because of not being prayer, and when prayed God rejoices, those things will happen to them as well[867]. "Love you neighbor as on yourself", says the Old Testament (Lev. 19: 18). And the New Testament, by showing us the consummation, says "we put our soul for one another", as the consummate One and Son of God have His life for us (Jn. 3: 16).

So, when the saints a prayed, they rejoice, as ones who are consummate, as their Father consummate is[868]. So, you ask them and they will unhesitatingly give you. This is for they are not drowsy and idle as I am. And pray for me so I could be among them as well. And I will pray God to fulfill your asks, in the first place you to receive the power from above and the love for Him; and I will pray Him for Him to support you in his fear[869] and in the faith of your hearts. Therefore, remain doubtless and waiting for His mercy. And He "will make more than abundant the things asked by you and understood by us" (Eph. 3: 20). This is for His is the glory forever. Amen.

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the love of God. Somewhere there must be such a height elevated above all the things submitted to the laws and above them who fall under the slavery of their passions. Only through that personal reality, free of all possible servitudes, the people can raise to freedom.

[867] The consummation of God was shown in the fact of giving His Son to death for us. And the consummation of the embodied Son was shown in the fact of giving His human life for us. In a way, if God continues to be consummate, He will continue to suffer for us, to be in state of sacrifice for us. And us, if we want to be consummate as God is, we must do the same. That's why we receive the state of sacrifice within us. Throughs sacrifice you exit your own prison and you open the gate to others. The sacrifice means the broadness in love, the true conquest of others. The consummation consists of the power to conquer everyone while letting them to be free, and by making them too the owners of your goods. Through prayer we show God that we too open ourselves to Him. And through the prayers addressed to the saints we who that to the saints as well. Through prayers we too contribute to the union among us which is wanted by God.

To God too is a joy you to pray to Him, for by doing that you show your trust and your love as son, and God accepts you with love. This is for God Himself is a Trinity of love. And God shows Himself thus also in the deed of the creation and in His care for the creation.

[868] The love doesn't become exhausted, but the love increases by being practiced. Only through love the spiritual man grows up truly.

[869] Th fear of God is not a weakness as the fear of people is, but the fear of God is a strength towards people, a capacity of giving your life for God. The fear of God supports you through the sureness of the imperishable life into God. he who is leaning on the fear of God, he won't tremble because of people or because of the world, because he doesn't lean on the reed of a life that is wobbly and that it advances towards withering.

485. Question: A brother asked Abba of the monastery where the Fathers were, to give him a monastic cell nearby, and Aba deigned to give his that. Meanwhile, that brother met a monk who asked him to come a dwell in a monastic cell near to him. The brother answered him that he cannot do that without the approval from the Fathers and from Abba who wanted to give him that monastic cell. And by coming, the brother asked the other Oldman what should he do?

The answer of John: Brother, our Lord commanded us to have other more important than we are (Phil. 2: 3)[870]. So, if for the love we have for you we have told you to dwell near us, we have shown by our deed that we are more important than the brother is. But if we tell you this time: "Remain near to him", your love may reckon that we reject you from us because of not loving you. But you must judge the neighborhood of the places and the benefic for your soul out of those, and take heed at the word of the Apostle: "Probing everything, keep that what is good" (1 Thes. 5: 21). I have spoken these due to the love according to God, Forgive me, my brother, for the Lord!

486. Question towards the Great Oldman: A monk who dwelled in a monastic cell that wasn't his, he built up to himself a monastic cell nearby. And a bother who need a monastic cell came to him and he invited him to dwell together in the monastic cell he built. But the coming brother asked for that monastic cell to be bestowed to him with a contract. And the owner accepted to do that if the Fathers will allow that. But the condition was that the coming brother to draw water out of the well, on each week, two pitchers of water. And he asked the Great Oldman about that.

The answer of Barsanuphius: This is not appropriate to the monks. This is because, if you sign a contract between you, you might reach in court, and that won't be a deed of love. So, let the brother dwell that monastic cell without a contract. And if the owner of the monastic cell wants to ask him to leave, he

[870] From here it follows that we must take care for others more than for ourselves, for we cherish them more than us. Only thus it can be explained the commandment to sacrifice ourselves for others as Christ did it for us (1 Jn. 3: 16).

will have to leave, with humbleness and without resisting. And if the master of the monastic cell some to fill up his two pitchers of water, and he who dwell that monastic cell doesn't allow him to do that, let him not get disturbed, but let him bow down in front of him and bring back his empty pitcher, telling him: "Forgive me, brother, for the lord, because I have bothered you, and pray for me". And he will take heed at not to be disturbed by anger. And for his humbleness, God will defend that brother too against the enmity from the devil and he will be pushed to run after him and to bow down before him and he will bend down and fill up the pitcher with water and he will help him carry that pitcher. And the love of God will cover both of them and the loving-of-people God will save them.

487. Question: The monastic cell needs repairs. Should him who dwell in that monastic cell spend hi money even thought that monastic cell doesn't belong to him, or he is expected to leave it soon?

Answer: If somebody thinks that everything he has actually belong to God and are common to all believers, and that nobody has something belonging only to him, he must not cogitate thus. This is because that is characteristic to a bodily thinking. This is for even he has spent something but he won't remain there, another brother will have rest because of that and he will always bless him who spent to restore that monastic cell. This is for, if we truly reckon the said things: "With the measure you measure, it will be measures to you" (Lk. 6: 38), and: "He will reward each one according to his deeds" (Ps. 61: 11[871]), and: "May him give you according to your heart" (Ps. 19: 5[872]), He won't let that one come close vainly, but He will shout out

[871] In KJB we have: Ps. 62: 11-12: "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God. // Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work."; in ROB we have: Ps. 61: 11: "God uttered once, I reward these two things: that the power if of God and Your, Lord, it is the mercy; that You will reward to each one according to his deeds." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[872] In KJB we have: Ps. 20: 5: "We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners: the Lord fulfil all thy petitions."; in ROB we have: Ps. 19: 5: "We will rejoice of Your salvation and into the God's name we will be extolled. May the Lord grant you all your asks." (E. l. t.'s n.)

towards him: "I won't leave you, neither I will overlook you" (Joshua Navi[873] 1: 5).

488. Question: A brother asked the same Great Oldman: "Forgive me, master Father, because I dare to speak: I see mister Abba loving one more than me, and this thought upsets me by whispering me that he wants to be pleasant to some people. This is for, everything some people ask for, he gives them. But he doesn't give me anything. I once asked for a window but he didn't give it to me. On some other occasion I asked for a little whitewash, and he didn't give me that. And he gave that to other people. Why does he do that? And what should I answer to my thought?

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, one need patience. This is for our Lord said: "Into your patience you will gain your souls" (Lk. 21: 19). And the Apostle said: "You need patience" (Hebr. 10: 36). If God wanted to test you whether you can endure something, you shows yourself impatient. For hos many years you have been living thus in your monastic cell without saying anything. And by seeing another doing something, you immediately jump as burnt in fire. Why haven't you told to your thought: "I have been living thus for the whole time, won't I have patience for a few more days?". If you thought tells you: "And why has he done it to others?", you will answer it: "Those ones are saints, and I am unworthy and worthy of all troubles. If you reckon your Abba as favoring some people, and that's not true, you will lose your soul[874]. And if he favors somebody, will not be you who will be take accountable for that, but he will be accountable for you. And him who asks for something, let him examine the time, the circumstances, and his ability to use that thing. And then he will find out why he has not been given that thing which he wanted. And if doesn't find out the answer, he

[873] In the KJB this book, called *The Wisdom of Joshua the Son of Sirach (The Ecclesiastes)* is not present, but it is given in the ROB. The interested reader can find this book in an English translation on www.academia.edu, together with the other thirteen books not given in the KJB, under the title: *Bible Missing Texts*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[874] "Losing the soul" means also "no longer having soul", namely "becoming soulless". This means becoming insensitive and savage like a wild beast. But that is a torment of the man to himself and to people from around him. Such a man no longer is aware of himself; he estranges from himself, he gets alienated. Thus, one loses his soul in hell.

won't have to blame others by on himself, saying: "I am unworthy". And you will find escape from that thought, brother. This is the way of them who want to be saved and to live according to God.

489. An ole man among the fathers was dwelling in the monastery where the holy Old Men were too. And he was asked by his servant: "What do you want me to prepare for dinner?", he answered, furiously: "Do whatever you want". And the brother got upset, and he didn't know what to do. And he asked the Great Oldman: "Is him right talking like that, or he isn't?".

And the Great Oldman answered him: I am not allowed to condemn anyone. This is for every one carries his own burden. But as it seems to me, such an answer upsets the neighbor, even if we give such an answer for ascesis. The old man should have rather said to the brother with humbleness: "This thing I would like for today". And even if the brother cooked that tasteless and he served it wrongly, he should thank him. This is because, even if the brother does that thing well or wrongly, getting angry because of that it is worse than all passions. This is for such a man gets angry recklessly and this is not out of the knowledge of God, but this is rather a devilish work. Still, him who serves must be long-patient. This is for everyone who bears his brother with the fear of God, he will have the Ghost of God resting upon himself[875].

490. The same brother, by being honored and comforted by Abba and by the brotherhood of the monastery, according to the fear of God, he didn't feel himself healed, but he got even more troubled and he reckoned himself as not comforted according to the appropriateness, so that he left the monastery secretly. And the people form the monastery found out, later, where that old man was living, they wanted to pay him a visit and to pray him

[875] Being patient to the brother who bothers you it is the only means for appeasing him. Being strong in this sense is the only means to communicate him power. The Ghost that rests Himself upon the Son, He also rests upon them who attach themselves to the Son, and He gives them too, the resting, through the comforting brought form the Father. And he extends Himself with His resting united with the comforting produced by Him, within us, also upon the agitate brother, for the Ghost is the One Who make us brothers with the Son.

to turn back to them, for they heard that he was troubled. And they asked the Great Oldman, mentioning also the words of the Apostles: "Lest, because of too deep sadness, him to be overwhelmed" (2 Cor. 2: 7).

Answer: The Apostle told that because he surrendered that man to satan (1 Cor. 5: 5). And that one had reasons to get sad, because he was banished away from the community. That's why, by seeing him repenting, the Apostle told them: "strengthen you love towards him" (2 Cor. 2: 8). So, if you know that you were the ones banishing him away, you must go and bow down before him and beg him to come back. But if he decided to leave by himself, even if you go to call him back, for God, his will to justify himself will come upon him again. This is because he will be ready to let himself again to be prey to getting upset. And on any other occasion he will say again: "I was out and I was forced to come back". Therefore, let him be a little tormented by his thoughts, so that he will sorry for leaving. This is for if he is troubled in his body, he will benefit in his ghost. Thus, his pride and his urge to justify himself, they will be cut off from him, if he sees himself in many troubles. And then he will remember the resting from the monastery. And he will come back, with humbleness, and instead of discontent he will show thankfulness.

491. Question: Why, despite being sorry, he is ashamed of turning back?

Answer: If he repents and if he accepts to blame himself, saying: "I am guilty for everything", God Who said through the prophet: "You tell first your iniquities, so that you to be justified" (Isa. 43: 26)[876], God will see that his heart has been tamed and God will guide him in His fear towards his benefit[877].

[876] God justified him who repents, for the man doesn't justify himself.

[877] The heart of his who repents, it will become tamed, it will be softened, and it will lose its callousness that locks that man up in himself; he escapes the prison of his pride, and he enters the communication with God Who is the spring of the live and of the joy. The Kingdom of God is the kingdom of those who communicate through love, and that's why it is the kingdom of the unity, of the true human reestablished in the Trinity of the full communion among the supreme Persons.

This is for he says: "He will guide the gentle in judgment[878], He will teach the righteous His ways" (Ps. 24: 9[879]). And if he benefits more in the place he was firstly, the Lord will guide his heart to turn back there, with humbleness.

492. A brother who served as a soldier in the world, he entered the monastery and he asked the same Great Oldman if the can repent.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, God doesn't deject anybody, but God calls all the people to repentance. So, he who comes to God, he must come close with the whole his heart and he must sow with trust that he will reap. And he must expect temptations to his last breath.

493. Question: But how does God help him?

Answer: Son, the stadium is open. And him who wants to be saved, he will hear Jesus telling him: "Come to me all of you who are tired and burdened and I will rest you. Learn from Me that I am gentle and humble in heart and you will find resting to your souls. This is for My yoke is gentle and my burden if light" (Mt. 11: 28-30). Think at what you are hearing: "Gentle and humble", in order us too to learn these form Him. He who comes to God, he must not get discouraged or to fear. Otherwise, he won't ever set a beginning to his way. This is for God takes heed at his heart and at the intention of his will. And God knows the weakness of the man that the man cannot succeed in anything by himself. But God is everything and God give power to the worthy so that the man to work powerfully[880]. This is because fi God didn't give power to the strong one, where would the unfortunate man be? If God didn't give wisdom of the

[878] The gentle ones use the right-reckoning. They know the people's weaknesses. They keep the balance in judgment, by taking everything in account.

[879] In KJB we have: Ps. 25: 9: "The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way."; in ROB we have: Ps. 24: 10: "He will guide the gentle to judgment, He will teach the gentle His ways." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[880] The power of God becomes the man's power, but it also remains the power of God. God makes the man strong.

wise one and if God didn't change that one's heart, that one's wisdom would be like that of a stupid and of a lunatic. Therefore, let's get close to God, trustfully, by knowing that God is Him Who gives us power in battle. You must prepare your soul and not only for fighting, but also for getting crowned. May the Lord stand close you for helping you, through the prayers of the saints. Amen.

494. The ask of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: My thoughts imagine the world, and they entice me to turn back into the world. Have mercy on me, in order I to be sheltered through your prayers. This is because, by being I still in the same sins, I prayed God to make me worthy of your protection[881].

The answer of Barsanuphius: My beloved son, encourage yourself into the Lord. God has called you; do not get discouraged, but dare, for the beginning of the work according to God requires wars. But God defeats the enemies. The world's army is the darkness and its inheritance are the eternal torments. And the army of God is the light; and its inheritance is the eternal life. Experience, firstly, the two sides, and then chose whichever you want. And a powerful voice will come to you and it will wake up your heart which is still cold. And you heart will make you run quickly, as you ought to. Do not get afraid. For there are people who can guide you towards the Master.

495. The ask of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: The trouble of the war no starter upon me, it comes form me. Have mercy on me, Master, for your prayers to put an end to

[881] When he was in the world, he prayed God to bring him under the protection of Barsanuphius. Now he asks Barsanuphius to pray so that he could be protected by God. We pray God to places us under the protection of a spiritual man whom God will listen to. And we ask that spiritual man for his prayers which God will take us through, under His protection. God helps us to find that man who will find us to earn God's help. God wants us to uphold one another in the ascension towards God, and all of us to rejoice together of the life prepared for everyone. God wants us not only to do something person for strengthening ourselves, but Gode wats us also to do something for others, namely one to ask for another's prayers in order to gain humbleness, and another to pray for him in order to defeat his own egotism and to be strengthened through that one.

that. This is for I have lost what I had by meeting my brothers according to body, who came to see me. This is because the memory of the encounter persists within my mind. And it seems to me that I still am together with them. Help my helplessness and my fear of keeping the path to salvation. This is because I do not know how should I pray to God Who called me, after I tries to disregard Him, and after I have forgotten for an hour about His benefactions. That's why I pray you, have mercy on me, for I have sinned much. And the wars born out of my weakness and out of the helplessness of my faith, they wouldn't leave me. (And tell me if it is allowed and useful I to stop my people from coming to see me, in order they not to bring me the charming temptations of the world. This is because you know that my heart, because of still being cold, if they came, they would bring me disturbance and they would push me on the way of the war. Yesterday, these thoughts left me awhile, through your protection. But today I sat a little by myself, wanting to learn a psalm, and those thoughts rushed upon me so fiercely that I started sweating because of discouragement. That's why, I pray you, do not let me in the hands of my enemies, but you uphold me with your power and banish them away because they have multiplied upon me. And you see my heart than I do not fight the wars with pleasure. Do not let me be defeated because of my weakness and I to know their evilness and I to fall again in their traps, which I have been caught in, before running to you. Forgive me and pray for me, holy Father!

The answer of Barsanuphius: My beloved brother, our Master God has a book which are written in them who come to serve Him with sincerity; in that book it is also written the dowery they have gathered since their first day[882]. WE would pray Him Who "doesn't want the death of the sinner, but him to turn back and him to be alive" (Ezek. 18: 23), so prepare for you a place among those who are being saved. And He had mercy and He appointed you too together with me "Him Who wants that all the people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of

[882] The poet Octavian Goga expressed this idea persisting in the tradition of the Romanian people, by using the following words: "Dear children form this country / You wonder about how it is possible, / Santa Claus from heavens / To know everything, everything. / Behold how, the old man tells you, / Up there, in the porch, / He keeps on his knees a big book / And he writes down with a silver pen, / What child and what behavior, / And from there Santa knows, / For he is very smart".

the truth" (1 Tim. 2: 4). So, you have taken the gift. Not it depends on you to be written down in this book, or not[883]. If you want, you will be helped by Him Who said: "I you listen to Me, you will eat the goods of the earth" (Isa. 1: 19).

Lo, I have told you, take heed not to get sick with an incurable sickness. This is because by falling in that sickness you won't benefit either within the world. May the Lord protect you against the evil one and to save you in the eternal life. Amen. Son "let the dead to burry their dead" (Lk. 9: 60). And you will see how the Lord is extolled in the counsel of the saints[884].

496. The ask of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Abba, have mercy on me for the Lord, because when I rest alone there occur the hallucinations. But the hallucinations disturb me also when some people come and visit me, so that even when I lay down in bed, I am mastered by the hallucinations and I cannot rest. And because I am fearful by nature, the war stirs up even more and it doesn't allow me to sleep except for a little while. And as I said, disturbed and with fear. Because of that I also feel a weakness into my body and I barely move. So, you master know what is useful to me. Help me, Father. Forgive me, the sinner and the sick.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, we must extoll God for He shows us what the Scripture is proven true like. This is for it says: "Faithful is God Who won't allow you to be tempted above your power" (1 Cor. 10: 16). So, God allows you to live in ascesis according to your power. And He tempts the great ones, according to their power, with big temptations. And they rejoice of that. This is for the temptations bring the man to advancement. This is for, there where a good occurs, there will occur the war too. So, do not stop yourself because of the temptations. But you rejoice yourself for they bring you to

[883] That man receives the gift or the power from God to come ever closer to God. But it remains his responsibility to develop or not, this gift. God writes down everyone who has been baptized, in the book of the salvation. But it depends on each of us that God to write down, in his section, the deeds making him worthy of reaching or not, to God.

[884] If a monk turns back to the world, he will no longer fit the world. Let hi stay among monks and he will see how God is extolled through their living and prayers.

advancement. Despise the temptation, and God will help and protect you[885].

497. The ask of the same one; Holy Father, because of being I weak and sinner, I do not have daring to ask something from the merciful God, and that's why I am falling to you so that you to pray for me the sinner, so that God to make me worthy of serving Him and Him to bestow me power and understanding[886]. I pray you for all of these, for you heart to knows that I am nothing. But O believe, my good Father, that your prayers are able to make God lenient towards my sins, so that God to overlook my sins and Him to make me worthy of starting to walk of the blesses way; In order I, by stepping on it into knowledge, guided by your mercy, you the blessed one, I to ceaselessly give thanks to the loving-of-people God Who extolls me through you with all the goods. Forgive me my stupidity and my daring, and pray for me.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Better said, brother, may God of the heavens and of the earth strengthen you in His holly calling which He called you with, and may Him make you worthy of adoption which only a few are found worthy of. And may God support your heart as He did to Anna's heart, so that you to bring forth fruits blessed by God (1 Kings[887]: 1-2); and you to sing a new song to God; and you to progress in good deeds on the way ahead you; and you to serve God with a clean heart as an experienced soldier. So, do not allow yourself to get bent, do not weaken, but you run zealously towards the holy city of the saints and of the chosen ones, in order you to inherit the faith, in order you to achieve the hope and the love. And those will take you to the holy humbleness which is the mother of all virtues. And you will be saved forever and ever. Amen.

498. The ask of the same one: Being I sinner and helpless, I am not capable to do anything good or something pleasant to

[885] The temptation is given to you in order you to fight it. And if you fight the temptation, you will strengthen you will in resisting into God and by that you will advance into good. If you do not have the occasion to fight the temptations, you will get drowsy.

[886]

[887] In the KJB we usually use for this book the name: 1 Samuel. (E. l. t.'s n.)

God. That's why I pray you, Master, pray for me, because of being I, as I said, impeded by my weakness.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Blessed are you, brother, for you feel yourself as having sins everywhere. This is for, him who feels his sins, he will doubtlessly get disgusted of his sins and he will part with his sins[888]. And feeling your sins and asking the Fathers for help through their prayers towards God in order to be delivered of sins and of their eternal torments waiting for the sinner, it is a part of the repentance. We are going to pray for you. And you must use your power in order you to gain humbleness, obedience, and non-keeping your will in anything. This is because out of this it is born the anger[889]. And do not judge, either despise somebody. This is because out of this comes the bluntness of the heart and the blindness of the mind[890]. And out of these it will be born the indifference and the callousness of the heart. And you must take vigil in all the things, by thinking at the godlike law, out of which the heart is being warmed up by the heavenly fire. And do not get sad. This is for your calling is from God, brother. And to not get drowsy, neither you get weak. This is for God doesn't ask from you that what is above your power, but that what is according to your power[891]. Guard your mouth against the useless word and against the vain-speaking[892]. Do not cogitate within your heart

[888] He who doesn't feel his wickedness as sins and he praises himself with his inequities, he is an insensitive man, he is a cynic who cannot get out of his sins. Neither him who admits his sins jokingly, he doesn't truly feel his sins as such and he doesn't fight to part with his sins. Truly feeling one's sins is intertwined with a deep discontent and with a big sufferance for having sins. This is the beginning of the correction, through repentance and through the pricking of the heart.

[889] The will of standing by yourself it is one with the pride. And when the pride sees itself menaced or offended, it gives birth to anger. And the anger will not longer be a true will, because of being the man no longer in control of himself. And the proud man sees himself menaced in his mastery upon other things or upon other people. In the true will the man is in control of himself. Such a man is not the slave of his anger, or of his pride, or of his other passions. The man is truly strong when he likens God.

[890] The bluntness, or the insensitivity of the heart and the mind's blindness are united to one another. The insensitiveness of the heart is tied to the non-understanding of the value of the other people, and to the non-knowing about God and about the meaning of the life which is enlightened by the knowledge about God.

[891] The man's power is like grain of dust, but the power of God coming with man it bends the universe's laws, it fills up all the realities with godlike light, starting with the man himself.

[892] The vain-word comes out of a vain-man, and it make the vanity persist within that man. And the vain-man has buried his richness into his deeps, or he has withered that richness out, and he is spreading the death of the vanity around himself.

at evil words. And throw your power, through the prayers of the saints, in front of God[893], by saying: "Have mercy on me, for I am sinner!". And God will have mercy on you and he will guard you and He will protect you against all evil. And so, you will come from darkness to the true light, from straying to truth, from death to life, into Christ Jesus our Lord Whom it is due the glory forever. Amen.

499. The ask of the same one towards the other Oldman: Forgive me, Abba, for the lord, because of my daring and insanity and help me because of the multitude of my sins. This is because him who has committed a sole sin before God he needs much repentance, and what am I going to do, because I have been growing up together with the sin, and because I haven't stopped myself from continuing to upset God according to my power[894]? That's why I need your prayers so that all the sins to be removed from me[895]. And I need to be taught how to walk on this way, because I am a man who has come here from many oppositions and from many evils by the great mercy of God. Because of this, I pray you, you the pious Father, have mercy on me and guide me, as you reckon. And pray for me so that I will be able to keep your holy commandments, as I am trying to do.

Answer: Brother, for you have come to Him Who has been crucified for us, you too must take you cross and follow Him (Mt. 16: 24), and you must throw all your worry upon Him. "He Who has done more that we can ask for or understand" (Eph. 3:

[893] "Throw your power in front of God"; lay down your power as a carpet in the way of the light and of the power which irradiate out of God, and your power will be filled up with His power and with his light which are above-nature.

[894] My too tiny power, when I use it for doing good, it is very helpless. But it attracts to itself the huge power of God. But when my tiny power wants to do the evil, it will have considerable effects by itself. This is because using the man's power to do the evil it will separate the man from God and it will cause him soul death. And this causes to God a big pain and, in this sense, it upsets God, or it anger Him.

[895] The getting out of sine is one with getting out of one's egotism of a sort or another. But you cannot exit the egotism of the absence of your communion with others, if some of them doesn't open himself to you for a communication into good, namely into God from Whom comes the good and towards Whom we advance through good. It is a sense of the necessity of the prayers of others for me, in order to help me getting out of sin, or of non-communion.

20). "This is for He takes care of us" (1 Pt. 5: 7)[896]. So, do not get scared and Christ will help you. You must only have, in your mind, son, the word of the Holy Scripture and the preparation which that word tells you about: "Son, if you come to serve the lord, you will have to prepare your soul for temptations" (Sirach[897] 2: 1), because the "non-tempted man is inexperienced" (Resch., Agrapha no. 80, pp. 130-132). And again: "Blessed in that man who endures the temptation, for he will become experienced" etc. (Jas. 1: 12). I am not telling you these things, my brother, in order to scare out off, but I am telling you these in order to uphold you heart into the fear of God on the path to Him. This is for as all the saints advanced through many temptations and troubles. And they were well-pleasant to God, by being they helped by the grace of God. Do not fear, neither weaken. This is for we believe that God is Him Who plants you, and Who waters you up, and Who grows you up (1 Cor. 3: 6), by the prayers of the saints. Amen.

500. Question: What should I do, Father, for I am bothered by the thought of the fornication?

Question: Torment yourself as much as you can; this stays in your power. But do not trust that, but you smut trust

[896] God take all our worries, if we trust Him to entrust our worries to Him, so that Him to bear our worries. This is for he has take our worries from us virtually, when He was crucified for us. Now we are required to show our trust in Him, so that we to unburden ourselves of our worries. Our hardships will be solved by Him; our pains are relieved by His compassion; our mistakes will be forgiven by Him if we ask Him for that with trust; he fights our temptations together with us. We are only asked for trusting Him. Properly-said, we are asked only not to remain indifferent, but us too to fight, and to know that by fighting we bear a cross under which He is too, and He has an endlessly greater power than we have. Through the cross we communicate with Him. He bears the cross further on, for all out things. But now we too are required to place ourselves under the cross, next to Him, and to receive the communication offered by Him. The big weight is borne by Him. But He also allows us to bear the wight of the cross to the extent we can, by strengthening us with His power in bearing the cross. This too is a motif for which we are imparted with Him in the Holy Eucharist. We die with Him in order us to resurrect together with Him. We die with Him, to our egotism, and by that we receive from Him the power us to resurrect with Him in the communion with Him. By rejoicing us of t His commiseration with us, we enjoy also the power of the new life that comes to us from Him through this loving communion.

[897] In the KJB this book, called *The Wisdom of Joshua the Son of Sirach (The Ecclesiastes)* is not present, but it is given in the ROB. The interested reader can find this book in an English translation on www.academia.edu, together with the other thirteen books not given in the KJB, under the title: *Bible Missing Texts*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

the love and the protection from God. And do not get idle. This is for the idleness stays at the beginning of any evil (Paterikon, Poemen: 149).

501. Question: If a talk to my brother, I often use an angry word. And if I want to utter that word with love, I immediately will experience a fitly sweetness and an ugly movement of my body, so that I cannot look at the face of my brother without those. What should I do?

Answer: Both of them mean death: either speaking angrily or getting aroused within the body a movement of love for a brother. So, by leaving both of those, speak to your brother with self-control and God will help you. And in addition to all of these, guard your eyes. And pray for me!

502. Question: Whys should I do? Because of being I troubled by the war of the belly's covetousness and of the love for money, and of other passions.

Answer: If you are warred by the passions of the belly's covetousness, you will fight with the whole power that you have, according to God, in order not to give your body as much as it needs. Regarding the love for money, likewise, until the war troubles you, you won't keep anything more than you coat. You must fight thus regarding the vessels and even the smallest thing. And after you have overcome that war, you will procure that what you need, according to God.

503. Question: A brother inhabiting together with an old man, he asked the same Oldman John about diet and sleep and about the disturbance he had regarding some things which seemed to him as unjust to his old man.

Answer: The Fathers say that resting (offering food to) your neighbor is a great virtue, especially when somebody doesn't do this thing because of his weakness, or by wasting food. You must give your body as much as it is enough. And even if you eat for three times, you won't be harmed. This is

because what will the man benefit by eating only once a day, but without measure? So, you smut understand the thought of your old man with freedom. This is for, once you are living together according to God, he too must be allowed to speak freely. And you must do anything he says that it rests him, and this is the will of God.

And the sleep if of two sorts. Sometimes the sleep burdens the body because of the much-eating, while some other times does that because of helplessness. This is because, when somebody cannot fulfill his job, the sleep comes to him. And to much eating it will follow the war of the fornication. This is for the much-eating burdens the man to sleep in order to defile his body. He who can discern he find out how and where this comes from to him. We are asked to do that what stays in our power and nothing more. This is for the cover and the mercy from God will strengthen our helplessness. For Him it is due the glory forever. Amen. Pray for me, brother! But try and notice if you speak with humbleness and with right-reckoning in an undisturbed manner. And if there is something that is not such, you will chock up your contrary thought and you will shame that thought up. Ans thus that thought will cease[898]. And do not get troubles by something done by the old man. But say: "God know what is useful". And this will appease you. Think at the old man with humbleness and let him do whatever he wants. Pray for me, you most honored brother.

[898] The words express the realities existing among people on the pan of the earthly life. Sometimes the words exceed the existing relationships by wanting to prepare better relationships for the future. But on many occasions the word cross beyond that what is given us, or that what can accomplish us in our earthly life, and that shows that the people tend towards an existence plan superior to the earthly plan. When the words do not serve to these purposes, they will rather entangle the people's life. And because the man is responsible for anything he does and thinks, he will be also held accountable for the words which do not serve these purposes but which entangle (the logos of) the relationships among people, the words which fill up those relationships with the darkness of the mistrust and which throw the relationships in a dirty murkiness and which cover anything with nonsense. The depthless beauty of the words, the more it has got refined, the more it has become tempted by evil. In this beauty shines the praising of the passions, and the abjection of the inferno. This is illustrated by some of the modern poetries as this one shamelessly uttered by a woman: "My sweet head / Snake fur / only in the viper the desire dies / only in flesh the memory of the meat gets washed up": or in the images of the borderless praises of some pitiful human weaknesses.

504. Question: If a brother lives with an old man and that old man is unable to answer when asked about something, and the brother is tormented by thoughts, can that brother ask another old man, either by having the permission from his old man or not having that permission? Or should him remain bothered by his thoughts?

Answer: If the brother know that Abba wants to be beneficial to his soul, he must dare and ask him: "I have some thoughts; what do you want me to do about that?". And the old man, by himself, as a man having his son ill and taking hi sons to a doctor and paying for his healing, the old man will gladly take his disciple to a man who has the gift of the healing. And if the old man cannot stand that, let the brother tell him nothing about that. But if the brother finds an occasion give him through the oikonomia of God, let him ask another spiritual old man regarding his thoughts and let him ask not to tell his Abba about that. This is because, otherwise, he will throw his Aba in the passion of the envy and here will be a big trouble because he has asked another old man about his thoughts. But let the brother not be offended by his old man for his old man having not such a gift. This is for the gifts from the Ghost are diverse and they are shared among people: to one so, to someone else thus. And if the brother finds no occasion to ask some other old man, let him endure while praying God to help him.

505. Question: A brother, easily getting stirred up to anger, he asked the same Oldman about that.

The answer of John: If you fought top die towards each man and to gain some humbleness, you would get rest and that would get you out of many dangers[899]. Let you heart get humble in front of God and God will come to your help in everything[900].

[899] To die to any man not through indifferentism, but by not giving importance to his words and behaviors which stir up passions within you. It means you be insensitive to anything that brings you sinful thoughts. That is a die that, for it reconciles with the humbleness, it is one with the lenience, with the understanding of the human weaknesses, but also with guarding yourself clean from that what can bring to you sins out of your weaknesses.

[900] If that what makes you non-lenient it is your pride, that what makes you lenient is your humbleness. That's why, the humbleness is open to the kindness coming from God Who is

506. A brother askes the Great Oldman: Father, pray for me, because I am weak with in my soul and in my body, in order the Lord to strengthen me so that I to thank Him. And pray also for my brother who lives with me, because he too needs mercy.

The answer of Barsanuphius: may the Lord strengthen you towards all the good things, as you have asked for. Behold, this too is a good thing: to live, according to your possibility, in peace with your father who is together with you. And He Who said: "I have come to throw fire on earth" (Lk. 12: 49), let Him throw that fire within your heart and within my heart, and I to see you growing up as the Lebanon's cedar trees and flourishing up like a date palm (Ps. 91: 13[901]) "in the Paradise of my God" (Apoc. 2: 7). This is for, by being this fulfilled, I will taste myself the goods and I will be glad[902], in Christ Jesus our Lord Whom it is the glory forever. Amen.

507. Question: Pray for me, Father. And I prey you to show me where does it come to me from, such a big helplessness in my serving and in my hand-work? And how comes that, because of my drowsiness, my thought tends towards eating and sleeping?

Answer: Regarding the prayer, if I have prayer, I cannot pray for my own soul more that I pray for you soul[903]. This is because tremble of Him Who said: "Love you neighbor as on

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the spring of the kindness. God is lenient too, for God is kind and truly powerful. That's why, in the lenient humbleness, we feel within us the lenience of God.

[901] In KJB we have: Ps. 92: 13: "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God."; in ROB we have: Ps. 91: 13: "Being they planted in the house of the Lord, in the courtyards of our God they will flourish up."

[902] Like him who loves suffers the hardships of his beloved one, likewise he who loves will be imparted with the joy of the goof fruits of the efforts of his beloved one. This happens especially to the spiritual father in his relationship with his spiritual son, as it happened, likewise, in the relationship between the earthly father and his son. This is for the joy doesn't remain only within him who has gained it, but that joy will be common to both of them, for their patience and efforts have been common too.

[903] If they who love on one another they meet each other in their pain and in their joy for one another, all the more him who prays will have his beloved one in his prayers which he manifests in, ceaselessly, his care for his beloved one. Ands they who pray for one another, they meet so much, for they meet into God.

yourself" (Lev. 19: 18). And I do to the extent of my power; but the mercy belongs to God Who has had on us until now and He will have from now on too, a great mercy. I do not deny that He has done that, because that will mean ingratitude.

And about helplessness, now it is so, some other time it will be different. It is so the way. Anyone who travels a little flat road and then he encounters precipices and mountains. And then after, he will meet again a flat road. But he says: "give thanks in everything" (1 Thes. 5: 18). This is for "we are debtors" (Rom. 8: 12) in everything[904].

Regarding the food, the drink, and the sleep, let all of them be preceded by the giving of thanks. You must cogitate at the word of the Apostle: "Either you eat, or you drink, either you do something else" (1 Cor. 10: 31). Guard this in everything and God Whom you thank[905] He will guard you.

508. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards the same one, who asked the Great Oldman if he should use medicines.

Brother, let both them who use a doctor and who do not use a doctor, to use their trust in God, saying: "in the name of the Lord we trust the doctors, for He will bestow us our healing through doctors"[906]. And they who do not use the doctors, let them do so with the trust in God and God will heal them up. So, if you use the doctors, you won't be wrong, and if you do not

[904] We must give thanks for everything, because of not having anything from ourselves, but we have all the things from God, towards our benefit. This is for the evil things too, they are useful to our strengthening.

[905] The "God of the thankfulness" (Greek text) is the God sensitive to our thanksgiving; He is the God Who, as Person, He rejoiced of receiving thanks and Who is not tied to a blind, unconscious, and lacking of affection law; He is God Who honors us by accepting to rejoice Himself by a thanksgiving brought Him by us who are all-small creatures and yet wonderful creatures through the conscience placed within us by God.

[906] Everything that our research can gradually know out of nature, or out of the human body, it is in the wide ambience of that what is not know and it won't ever be fully known, even though both the nature and the human body seem to be, on the other hand, as infinite. This is for right this creation of God is a mysterious ambience for all its elements, especially for the creation is rooted into the infinite God. That's why it is good to use that what the doctors know, but we must also pray God too, in order God to do in our benefit that what the doctors recommend to us, through their limited science. The know things must not be detached from the indefinite – but well ordered – whole of the creation. The knower man and the conscious nature have at their origin Somebody Who is more powerful and more knower.

use the doctors, you must not boast himself. This is in order you to realize that if you use the doctors, you will fulfill the will of God and nothing else. And if you want to follow to the word told by Elijah: "Today" (3 Kings[907] 18: 15; cf. The Life of Anthony 7; G.P. 26: 853), you will be freed of any worry[908].

509. Ask: Pray for me, Father, and tell me what does it mean that during night when I want to utter psalms, I feel within myself an idleness. And especially when it is cold. Then, for many times, I utter psalms and I pray while sitting. This is because I fear this is coming to me our of carelessness, so I pray you to clarify me, Father, and pray for me so I to do that what I am told.

Answer: All of us have received the commandment to pray for one another (Jas. 5: 16). Regarding the things which you have asked for, for you want to find out what those things mean, I am telling you that that is partially a mix of the seed of the devils, and it partially is also because of the weakness of the body. That's why, uttering psalms and praying while you are sitting, but with the pricking of your heart, it is not an impediment to be pleasant to God in your serving. As to him who does that while standing but having his mind scattered, his effort will be reckoned as nothing. May the Lord help you, brother. Amen.

510. I pray your holiness, Father, to help me, because I am weak in my soul and in my body. I have many days when I am so weak that I must eat in the morning and then to lay down on the bed. But it happens also that my soul gives thanks and says that God has sent me this helplessness because of my many sins, but from time to time I torment myself, saying discourages that I am not worthy to eat my bread as everybody does it, once a day, in peace. And again, it comes to me the thought that I

[907] In the KJB we usually use for this book the title: 1 Kings. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[908] At note, in the Volos Edition, it is said that what is here declared about Elijah it is referring to the death penalty give by God to Ahaziah, who was the King of Samaria, because he didn't ask his healing from God, but from Beelzebub (4 Kings 4: 1). But it seems to us that the text is referring to the word of Elijah: "Alive is the Lord of the powers, for today I will show myself to Him" (3 Kings 18: 15). It is recommended to the ill one to immediately appeal God.

must not speak against God. "Doesn't Him know everything? Does it happen anything without Him knowing it? Endure it with thankfulness". I pray you, Father, for the mercies of God, pray for me and show me how should I pass over these in order I not to be overwhelmed by sadness[909].

Answer: Your holiness has written to my holiness for I to pray for you, you who love God. And I, the unwise Father, I ask you my wise son, you to do the same thing and you to -pray for me because I spend my days in vanities. You tell me that you thank God at least once, but I don't do that ever[910]. Although, because I cannot keep my silence, I am going to talk to you as it comes into my mind. If somebody eats, but not for pleasure, but for the weakness of his body, God won't condemn him. This is because the foods are forbidden because of the satiation and because of the body's frolics. But there where is helplessness, the work of the body's frolics won't be set in motion. This is for, there where is helplessness, there occurs the need for calling upon God. Therefore, I reckon that giving to the body the things it needs, it truly is something necessary and he who find the alleviation of his illness by eating, he won't be condemned. This is for God doesn't ask from the man more than the man can give. As I said, I do not say that that what I have told it necessarily is the truth. But I have unveiled that what I had within my heart. So, you to have to judge and you will find out that what is beneficial to you[911]. And forgive me, because I cannot ever keep my silence.

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[909] These questions unveil to us the endless multitude of waves, which agitate the human soul. The soul's life isn't simple; there are in the soul endless resources actualized in questions, in doubts, and in alternative answers. By this too, the soul is always new and the soul shows a thirst for life on a plan that is totally superior to that what the soul knows and can in the insinuating moments. And by that the soul can enrich himself constantly, the soul can always advance, and the soul can always refine himself. That's why, all of those must not bring the soul to despair, but they must strengthen the soul's certitude about his eternal destination.

[910] In his wisdom, the Old Barsanuphius, by saying his spiritual son menaced by despair, because of his helplessness to pray, to trust God, to have no doubts, he presents himself as being in the same state, or even worse. This is in order him to give to his spiritual son trust in himself, so that the spiritual son not to imagine that he is the worst among all.

[911] Taking out of word that what is beneficial, it is a collaboration work between him who tells those word and him who hears those words. He who doesn't hear totally good words, he can get out of those words only that what is good, as also one can also take bad conclusions out of good words. But the hearer can give even more strength and content to the good or bad words of him who utters those words.

511. The same one, because of being weak and because of not being able to stand to do his serving (the praying program), neither being him able to eat only once a day, he prayed the same Great Oldman to pray for him and top tell him what he should do.

Answer: When the Jews were to be liberated form the slavery of the Egyptians, they endured a great tribulation and a great trouble between the sea and the barbarians. And after those signs and wonders seen by their eyes as being done among Egyptians and all over their country, they have forgotten about God Who did those, and they have come close to despair by seeing the Pharaoh and the whole his army about to fall upon them. Only Moses trustfully remained next to the Almighty God. And for "near is the Lord to them who truly call upon Him" (Ps. 144: 18)[912], the Knower of the People answered Moses who was shouting out at Him, by covering up with the door of the silence his lips: "Why are you shouting out at Me? Hit with the staff from your hand, the sea, and the sea will split' and the people will cross through the sea and I will be glorified into Pharaoh and into the whole his power" (Exod. 14: 16-17).

Here it is likewise. It is a helplessness and an impediment from the devils. And then here is a trouble and a disturbance from the thoughts. And the body gets drowsy because of weakness and it is pressed upon by the burned from the devils. If moses shouts out, namely if the mind that takes vigil shouts out, either you are sitting, or you a lying down, that will be heard by Him Who hears the hidden things of the heart, and the word will be fulfilled: "I am sleeping but my heart is watching" (Song of Songs 5: 2). And he rebukes the sea, saying: "Open way to my people". And the Pharaoh gets drowned with all his army, and the people gets appeased and they feast and rejoice, by celebrating the presence of God[913]. So, either you

[912] In KJB we have: Ps. 145: 18: "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth."; in ROB we have: Ps. 144: 18: "Near is the Lord to them who call upon Him, to all of them who call upon Him into truth." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[913] The soul that is tormented by all sorts of thoughts, of troubles, of doubts, it is like an ocean storm which the soul seemingly has no escape from. There is a finite infinite in the monotony of the same waves, always various within the limits of this monotony. The deep of that ocean locked in itself it is one with the death, which will be in the future life with even more endless

stand or you sit down, either you lay yourself on your bed, let your heart watching and committing the liturgy of your psalms, bowing down to prayer and ceaselessly falling down before Him[914], either during day or night. And then the shameless enemies which wage war to your soul, they get far from you. Regarding a second meal, let you diet to be decent and with the fear of God, and be convinced that you won't be condemned. This consists of not taking anything with lust, but whatever you find, you will take it with self-mastery. And you must remain hungry and not satiated after eating. And pray for me in order I to be able to walk in good spirit and with gladness the way stretching ahead on me thig and trodden, and full of peace, and full of joy, and full of gladness, and full of light. This is for one cannot get ever satiated of these ones, and besides this one there is no other way.

512. Question: The same one, eased of weakness (of illness), he asked the same Great Oldman: Father, when I share myself with food, I get burdened. And again, I cannot fast, because my body get weak and I start sweating. And the callousness of my heart and my pride banish the tears away from me. What should I do?

Answer: Brother, I am embracing you into the Lord, praying Him to strengthen your love and to give patience to you. You must know that this war than burdens you after eating, it comes from the devil, on the purpose to make you drowsy. This is for this war warred me and burdened me very much and for a long time; and it made me vomit every night. And then I started eating small quantities of food, and that change the war. This was because, immediately after I took a bite in my mouth, it made me to vomit. Then I started to do that once in every two

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tumult, btu still a monotonous tumult. But that soul that get appeased by the conscience of the presence of God Whom all the realities are enlightened in, that souls is open to the comforting and to the reassurance of the infinite goods from God. This light is a true celebration to that soul. This is the only way which one can really advance on, though this advancing it one with the quietude. It is said so at the end of this "Answer". This soul will no longer remain engulfed in the same tumult that is monotonous despite the whole relative difference among its waves.

[914] You can bow down in prayer and you can fall at the feet of God, even while sitting or remaining lying on your bed. This is for you bow down with your unseen mind before the unseen One and you fall with your mind before Him.

days, in order I to like the food. But it happened the same thing. But, by the grace of Christ, being warred and having patience, this thing stopped. And my power weakened more than I can describe, but I didn't renounce and I fought until the Lord strengthened me. I did all those, brother, because I was sick. You too take care of yourself, and Go will help you. This is for nobody envies you except that one which will be toppled over by the Lord.

Regarding the fasting, ow your head and remember the lives of the Fathers and their vigils and humble yourself in heart; and if you can, fast until the ninth hour (tree o'clock on the afternoon). And if you cannot do it, you won't be worried. But strive to keep the fasting of the inwards man, Guard yourself against eating out of wood[915] out of the other passions too. And this fasting of the inward man will be received by God and He will cover you up for the bodily fasting.

Regarding the things you have said about tears, that the callousness of your heart and your pride banish you tears away from you, abolish the two mentioned ones and then the tears will come to you, by the help of the saints. But you are sweating because you have caught a cold, warm yourself up a little and God will help you sand pray for me, because my drowsiness leads me to many evils[916]. Still, I do not despair, by having the merciful God.

513. The same one, by falling sick and not being able to endure the pain, he asked the same Great Oldman for prayer and help.

Answer: By brother and my beloved one into the Lord! With the assurance of the love that I have for you into Christ, I am unveiling you the mysteries of God. This is for you know and you are convinced that I am praying to God, day and night, in order Him to save us from the cunning one, by taking us into His eternal Kingdom. So, I have been praying as usual, God told me: "Let Me test him towards the benefit of his soul and

[915] As Adam and Eva did.

[916] After giving many advices to them who complain about their weakening in their spirit, Barsanuphius asks them to pray for him. This too is a means for accustoming them to prayer. This is for the love for another makes you pray more easily than for yourself. And thus you will get accustomed to pray for yourself as well.

through a bodily illness, in order him to know how far his patience goes, and what will he inherit through prayers and pains". And I said: "Try him, Master, with mercy, as a true son and not as on an illegitimate son". It hasn't been necessary for I to show you these things, but I have unveiled them to you so that you to know the joy prepared for you. So, do not be sad, for God will have mercy on you. And if you doubt, bow down your head, by knowing what the holy martyrs endured, and anoint with a little oil mixed with holy water, that place that hurts you. And our God, with his will, he will have mercy on you as He wishes. It is not a pleasure for me to see you suffering, either with your body, or with your soul. May God have mercy on you. Pray for me.

514. Of the same one: Ask for prayer and help for the same illness towards the same Great Oldman.

Answer: My drowsy and speaking-against brother, why are you troubled, why do you shout out and why do you send asks far, while you have Jesus near to you and wanting to be called by you to your help[917]? Shout out towards Him: "Master!", and He will answer you. Touch the tassel of His coat (Mt. 9: 20) and He will heal you not only of this illness, but even of all illnesses. If your mind was there where it ought to be, neither the bites of the venomous snakes nor of the scorpions wouldn't be able to reach the feeling of your body[918]. "I have forgotten, he says, to eat my bread because of the voice of my sigh" (Ps. 101: 5-6[919]). Do not be upset. The mercy of God is

[917] Jesus is near to us. He wants to help us. But He doesn't want to work upon ourselves without us willing that, without us feeling the need for His help, showing us that by calling Him. He doesn't want to treat me like I would be an object, I am would have not souly benefit out of the bodily healing that He bestows it to me, because of me reckoning that that healing hasn't been done through Him as God. It that was the case, I would trust only the nature's laws, and I would base myself on them.

[918] The mind advanced in to the sweetness of the spiritual life lived into God, it can overwhelm the feeling that it is uncountable smaller, of the bodily pain. The martyrs who were thrown to wild beasts, they didn't feel, in their fiery love for Christ, the bites of the beasts.

[919] In KJB we have: Ps. 102: 4-5: "My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread. // By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin."; in ROB we have: Ps. 101: 5-6: "Wounded is my heart and it has got withered like the grass; I have forgotten to eat my bread. // By the voice of my sigh, my bone got stuck to my

near to you. I am embracing you into the Lord. Make yourself healthy by shouting out towards Him.

515. The same one, very burdened and awfully tormented, he prayed the Great Oldman again, for healing.

Answer: May my God to send you quickly the healing of your soul and of your body. And I believe that through His holy name you will get healed. Persevere as much as you can in thanking Him, for He has loved you and for He has had mercy on you through His pedagogy.

516. The thanks of the same one given immediately after the answer came to him from the holy Great Oldman, and the brother got healed on that very moment, and he sent thanks to God and to the Great Oldman, asking the Great Oldman, in the same time, for his ceaseless prayer, for him to progress, and for his salvation[920].

Answer: My all-beloved brother, let's raise ceaseless praise to our Master God, for He bestows the present things for a peaceful life. This is for, by elevating us through hardships, he gains us; and by tempting us, he bestows us the escape and the power towards enduring the troubles (1 Cor. 10: 13). And thus he "kills us and He makes us alive" (1 Kings[921] 2: 6), and He "makes us example to the world, to the angels and to the people" (1 Cor. 4: 9)[922]. Let's, therefore, gladden Him through

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flesh." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[920] All these "Letters" are mentioning the trust we just have in others' prayers. Even the comforting brought to somebody by the fact that he thinks at somebody else who takes care of him through prayer, it will bring a strengthening to the sick one.

[921] In the KJB we usually use for this book the name: 1 Samuel. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[922] "He kills us and He makes us alive", namely He takes us to the brink of the precipice, He makes our life almost gone. But right through that we receive a totally new life in comparison to the life on earth, a life coming exclusively from God Who is the spring of the life. Right in this state of dead to the earthly life we feel the power of God towards the helpless of the world and of ours. And out of feeling this power we come back to another life that doesn't trust the body but that trusts God and the Holy Ghost. Through death we cross to the true life. We feel the power of this life right in reaching the brink of the live according to body. That's why, as we get weaker, we will feel ourselves strengthened into God, if we continue to exist and work

our humbleness, through our patience and gentleness and long-patience and decency and peace and thankfulness[923]. May it be to you, you all-desired brother, all the things which you have asked for into Christ Jesus Whom I am embracing you into, and I pray Him to guard you against all the evil. Amen.

517. Of the same one about a trouble of his heart. And where does it come from that he still is submitted to a light illness?

Answer: You my drowsy brother, why don't you "leave the dead to bury their dead" (Lk. 9: 14)? You must despise your body that is destined to be food to the worms. This is for you won't help your body by anything when it will be submitted to rotting. That's why he says: "Do not make to yourself a lust out of the care for your body" (Rom. 13: 14). Lo, this is a theme to cogitate at. And about the things you have written to me, a part of it is the remnant of the venom, and another part is from the devils, so that, turn a little your though towards yourself and if, by the will of God, the remnant from the devil will decrease, that remnant of the venom won't harm you. I pray God, according to the power of my helplessness, Him not to reject your asks but Him to fulfill your asks abundantly and with the love for people. This is for it is characteristic to Him to be merciful. But it belongs to you to pray. Understand what I am telling you, and pry for me.

518. The ask of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Tell me, Father, if one must help his body when needed, with food appropriate to the illness, or if the ill one must eat sooner; or if he must respect the appointed time and him to despise all the other things, even if some hardship would come to him out of that.

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for Him. "When I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor. 12: 10). As we get closer to the bring of our earthly life, we feel ourselves on the porch of the eternal life. This wonder happening with us, it amazes both the angels and the people.

[923] By all of these we open yourselves to God and we communicate with God, we tear down the wall of our pride and of our egotism, and we get our humanity out of our petrifaction.

The answer of John: God has given us knowledge through the godlike Scriptures in order us to lead ourselves on the right way. The Apostle says: "Try everything, but keep the good" (1 Thes. 5: 21). The man needs nothing else but to not take and to not do anything with passion. If he does that because of his weakness or because of his need, that won't be reckoned to him as a sin, nor as indifference. But if, by being him healthy, he searched for the satisfaction of his body, that will become a lust to him. So, by managing our body according to the need, we will make our body as servant of our liturgy[924]. This is for, if we take care of animals for our need, how much more must we take care of our body, for the body is the tool of our soul[925]? And when the tool gets blunt[926] and it will impede the craftsman, even thought the craftsman is highly skilled. The Apostle, by taking in account the weakness of Timothy's stomach, he commanded him to use a little wine (1 Tim. 5: 23), because Timothy told to the Apostle that he was getting tired in his work of spearing the Gospel. So, one needs discernment (right-reckoning) and he who has the discernment he won't fall easily. Forgive me, brother, because I do not know if I have spoken correctly, but I have spoken because we must not oppose. I told to your love what I have had within my heart. But you should do what you reckon as being the best.

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[924] Servant of "Liturgy" it is in the French Edition. In the Volos Edition it is "servant of the need". But that need which we will have served to it is "Liturgy" or praising to God, which we cannot fulfill it without our body while we still are on earth. Through the body we speak and do the good deeds; through body we utter the prayers and the psalms. So that we owe to feed our body in order to be capable of bringing that service to God, but not in order to satisfy the body's lusts.

[925] The animals, the things, the nature's energies are indirect tools of the soul. We use all of those through our body. Our body is the direct tool which we make all the other things as indirect tools of our soul. The whole cosmos is like a widened body of the man. All the world's realities are felt by the soul through the body, and they become through body not only objects of the soul, but they also become a wide felt field and means of working upon the world. All of them are gathered together in the knowledge and in the feeling of the soul through the body. By cleaning up the feelings of our body, we will clean up the feeling of all realities. The body is also a means, but the body is also together-subject of feeling all the realities together with the soul. If we do not use our body for working the good through it, but we use our body only for satisfying its lusts by using the things, we will make our body an egotistic servant to the evil.

[926] The body as tool of the soul gains an amazing dexterity in those works which the body get accustomed to, and that dexterity cannot be explained without the presence of the mind into the body. Al the palm's muscles gain a flexibility according to the work they accomplish. The eye catches nuances of the seen shapes and of the spiritual sentiments of the persons. The body is a living screen of all the images united with the spiritual revelations of the soul.

519. Question: How comes that I feel a big tiredness when I wake up at night to read the psalms? I feel like wick. And anything I do, I do it with difficulty. Could that be because of my illness, or it is from the work of the devils?

That what is because of your illness, it is known. If the body doesn't receive its usual food, it will be proven that the body is sick. And its service must be eased. And if you body eats like usual but it doesn't get up to do its job, it will be obvious that these things come from the devils and you will have to force your body, but, doubtlessly, according to its power and not overmeasure. And when you heart take vigil, the body's sleep has no importance even when the body is close to snore. This is for, if the body hears a breaking in of the thieves, it will engage all his power in order to get rid of thieves. If we think thoroughly, we too are alike[927].

520. Question: Tell me, Father, if the illness can come from God, and how can one know that?

Answer: The illness can come from God. When somebody feels his illness, but he doesn't feel also the disturbance of the suffering, such an illness is from God and it will scatter away the war[928]. In such a case one needs to loosen up his ascesis, a little. But the illness can work also through the disturbance brought by some of the passions. Then one must not loosen up his ascesis in anything. This is because the passion comes from the devils and any loosening up it will increase it. So, of is useful that there where the body is warred, the body to be persecuted, even thought by that some illness could come upon the body, lets by being the body fortified, the soul to be thrown into illness. But again, if it is obvious that the cause of the illness, in the sense that the body got sick because of a tiring

[927] The main thing is us to remain awake in our soul, even thought our body is drowsy because of its tiredness.

[928] An illness is from God when the man hasn't reached in it through some passion of his, and when the man doesn't work the passion: for instance, the covetousness of the belly, the debauchery, or the drunkenness. Such an illness doesn't give place to the war, to the rebellion, or to the sadness etc.

trip, or because of some indigestion, then one should loosen up his ascesis, a little. But he must do that appropriately and not excessively. This is because otherwise the devils will get involved too.

521. Question: Teach me, Master, whether the illnesses coming from our carelessness and from our disorder, are they from nature? And why are those illnesses sent by God to the man? And if the bad happenings (accidents) come upon somebody due to a preceding permission given by God?

Answer: The illnesses due to carelessness and to the life's disorder, they come form nature. And the illnesses sent to the man in order to correct the man they are sent because of man's disobedience. So, it depends on you to life carelessly and disorderly and to fall into the first sort of illnesses, until you will become again ordered; and to escape those illnesses through repentance. Regarding the bad happenings (the accidents), those too are due to carelessness and they are useful to us in order us to get corrected, so that we can repent. But it is a feature of the spiritual man to be able to discern among those.

522. Question: When the illness is mixed and comes both from nature and from devils, tell me, Father, what should one do? But, first of all, pray for me into the Lord.

Answer: He who wants to be victorious, he forces himself a little either to fasting or to vigil, either to any other good thing. For instance, if somebody owes not to eat, according to the custom, until the nineth hour (three o-clock in the afternoon), but his weakness forces him to eat at the three hour (nine o-clock in the morning), let him force himself not to eat until the sixth hour (at noon). And let him do the same regarding the taking of vigil. This striving resists the devils' work[929]. And the

[929] This innocence is a means of strengthening one's will, or one's spirit, against his inferior impulses which elicit the body's weaknesses, but sometimes they lead also to other passions which enslave the man. The lust for food is among the first ones, and the anger is among the last ones. Only the man who is strengthened through will, the peaceful and generous man, only him can become dwelling place of the godlike Ghost. Only such a man is free for the true

loosening up of the ascesis is a help given to the body. One should do the same regarding the other things. Let the man spend his days by doing these two with right-reckoning, into the fear of God. May the Lord help to our weakness in all things. Pray for me.

523. Question: If somebody experience difficulties in getting accustomed to the usual food, what should him do?

Answer: If one gets accustomed with difficulty, he sometimes can force his thought a little. And if he cannot do that, he will loosen his ascesis a little. This is for this helplessness is an illness too. Strive yourself, brother, not to forget these. And I believe that through the holy prayers you will be helped by God and saved.

524. Question: Forgive me, Abba, the Fathers tell us to despise our body, but then they also say that we must govern our body with right-reckoning. I pray you, make me understand this difference between advices.

Answer: Regarding the things you have asked about, the Apostle shows the difference between those two, by saying: "Do not make a lust out of the taking care of your body" (Rom. 13: 14). And the same one says: "Nobody hated his body, and he feeds it and he takes care of it" (Eph. 5: 29). So, if you see in work the pleasure, you will despise your body. But when you see your body tired and suffering, you will take care of it and you will feed your body in the fear of God, in order your body to serve you in the spiritual liturgy.

525. Question: Because you have said that we must take care of our body when it is tired, through a special diet, should we not stop our body from the harmful foods and drinks?

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relationship with God and with his fellow humans. Only such a man is strong and unpreoccupied with himself because of his weakness.

Answer: If the man gets accustomed to restrain himself from the harmful foods, this won't be a sin. And if the man takes everything coming to him, and he despises God for the harm of his body, bigger that this is not to allow himself to be stolen through the door, namely through the self-appreciation. But the man must guard himself against eating or drinking passionately. This is because this means one to be defeated; so, that rather harms him than being beneficial to him. But both the health and the illness are from God Who said: "I will kill and I will make alive, I will hit and I will heal; and there won't be anybody to escape My hands" (The Second Law 32: 39). But God, when He wants, He bestows health through the doctor, and when He wants, He bestows health by word[930]. And the prolongation or the illness or the non-prolongation of the illness depends of the prescience of God. So, they who totally surrender themselves to God, they will escape from their worries. And God will do how He wants and how it is beneficial. So, each one will use the food as he can, or, better said, according to the faith he has.

526. Question: What does it mean "according to the faith he has"? Please explain me this.

Answer: If God sanctified all the thing and He cleaned them up in order to be shared them who believe in them, let the man take with gratitude the things he finds and let hi make no difference. This is for not the holy and clean things do harm, but only the conscience and the suspicion of the man, by thinking that those will harm him. This is because that one by being hesitant in his faith, he makes differences among things and that's why his illness advances in him. If the man believes in Him Who came and healed all the diseases and helplessness among people, he will believe that powerful is Him to heal not only the bodily illnesses, but also the illnesses of the inward man. But if the man makes differences among foods, he will avoid the harmful foods, because of not trusting that he can

[930] In the word of God, which all the realities have been created through, it is given also the power to heal somebody. This is for that word mobilizes the forces from within the human being through the trust elicited by that word. This was shown by Christ for many times. The word produces the faith within him who received that word. And the faith is a great fortifying and transforming power within man.

bear those. And so, his thought has been defeated and he has been proven as not having a strong faith. That's why, you must avoid taking something passionately. This is because this harms the soul and the body[931].

527. Question: If somebody thinks one that he won't be harmed, but he feels the pain from his illness, what must him think at, in order him not to fall into faithlessness?

Answer: If he eats with faith, but the pain persists, let him not doubt[932]. This is for God permitted him to be in this suffering by knowing that this pain delivers him from many passions. Then he remembers the Apostle's word saying: "When I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor. 12: 10). And let him now think that this comes to him because of the foods which he reckons as harmful to him, but let him believe that this comes to him from God's permission. Even if he imparted himself with

[931] The content of this "Letter" is complex, it is difficult to explain, because Barsanuphius unites in it the theme of the bodily illness with the theme of the souly illness, and that's why he speaks about two kinds of faith by suing the same word. By faith, one discerns between foods which can harm him bodily and souly, but by doing so he proves himself as not having the strong faith that God can protect him against getting harmed by those foods, or that God can heal him up of any of his bodily illness, a fact that protects him against his souly passion too. Another, by believing that all the things are holy for being created by God and that god can heal any illness and that god can protect him against any passion through his steadfast faith, he will have the surety that God will heal him up of any bodily and souly illness; and that's why he uses any sort of food passionlessly. This intertwining between the bodily illness and the souly passion, and between the possibility of escaping from both of them through the strong faith, it is a reality, so that Barsanuphius is justified in presenting them in this intertwining. All the things for they have been created as gifts from God for us, are by that holy and harmful. But they who discern among things, they unite a passion with them and by that they make those things harmful. Saint Maximos the Confessor sin in his "Heads about Love" that the things have a pure sense of their which is form God, but we are the ones tying up the things to our passions. If we can detach the passion from the things, the things will no longer be harmful to us. Thus, in gold there is a pure sense, but we tie this sense to our greediness. So, in the man's freedom stays the possibility of using the things cleanly or of defiling the things. We must clean ourselves of passion, in order us to be able to see and to use the things in their cleanness. The man makes all the things dirty because he sees the things as separated from God. If we restore our connection with God, by seeing again the things united with God, we will bring the things back to their holiness.

[932] Let him not say that he used a harmful food instead of a harmless food.

the foods reckoned as good and useful, he wouldn't benefit anything from that without the will and the work of God[933].

528. Question: if one needs faith, why said Abba Isaiah that "if there is brought to refectory some food that harms you, you will force yourself not to eat it" (Abbe Isaïe, Recueil 5: 7; p. 27). So, even being present the faith, the food still will be harmful[934].

Answer: They who despise the medicines and the foods reached the measure of the faith, but not of the consummation.

530. Question: If one doesn't have such a faith, must him search for foods useful to his illness? Or must him only avoid the harmful foods? Or fi there happened to be serves a food that neither harms nor is useful, must him eat without fear?

Answer: One must avoid only the foods which harm him. And if there happens to be serves something that neither harms nor is it useful, let him not eat to his satiation, but only a little. This is because he who eats to his satiation, even if that food is useful to him, he will be harmed.

531. Question: If there happen to be served two sorts of foods, one cheaper and one more expensive, should one choose the cheaper one? And if the cheaper one is more pleasant, which one should one use?

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[933] That what we know it is framed within the general mystery of the entire creation, and by that it observes the order of the Almighty and Eternal God. If it isn't overpoured out of that power in fulfilling the partial work recommended by the doctor, on the measure of his knowledge that is limited to a sum of partial works, we won't be healed through that. And the powers from God are given to the man who is open to the by his faith. Such power overpouring are done through – and therefore also out of – our spirit. If we breed some animals by giving them only the food containing the vitamins reckoned as necessary by science, but we do not pet them and we don't love them, we will see that he won't thrive and they will love wight or they will even get sick.

[934] The educate man know that a food is harmful, more that the illiterate know that. That's why Abba Isaiah eats that food, but he knows that that food is harmful, in order to cut off, through faith, his tendency not to eat that food.

Answer: If there happen to be served to sorts of foods, take a little out of both of them. And if they are not alike, one should use the cheaper one. And if the cheaper one is more pleasant, and the more expensive one is available too, let one use it. And if the cheaper food is not available but only the more expensive is available, and it is more pleasant too, let one use it but he also must avoid the pleasure caused by eating that, by taking only a little of it. Why is that? Doesn't one need for his illness that what is very unpleasant? And isn't the man forced to use that unpleasant thing until he will be healed? It is alike if the thing is very pleasant, but one needs to use it, he will use it. And the man must take heed only at not allowing himself to be defeated by pleasure. And, even if that happens, after he crossed over that deed, let him reproach to himself.

532. Question: You told me that one is not forbidden to use the doctor in the name of God. But you said also that it will be good if one leaves everything to God, with faith and with humbleness, but my thought tells me: "If some bodily illness happens to you, you must show that to the doctor. This is because you haven't reached yet that measure for getting healed without medicines". But, on the other hand, my thought tells me not to use the medicines, but that I should rather use the holiness of the saints and to be content only with that. Tell me, you merciful Father, which one of these two should I use?

Answer: Brother, I see you worrying much about healing the bodily illnesses. I think that the Fathers do not worry that much about those. That's why I reckon that your second thought is better than the first one. This is for in that thought there is the consummate faith in God. while the first thought has the faithlessness within it. The second thought has the patience within it, that makes the man proven. The proven one gives birth to thew trust that won't be ashamed. And in the other thought there is the lack of courage, that is the sister of the fear, which it is dwelled by the fewness of the faith, the mother of the doubt that estranges from God, and that leads the people to perdition. His one makes the people friends of God, the other one make the people enemies of God. This one leads us to the Kingdom of Heavens, the another leads us into Gehenna. This one raises our head and gives us daring towards

our Master God[935]. The other one makes your head to bow down and it makes the man without daring towards God. This one gathers the mind in order to throw the whole mind's worry at God (1 Pt. 5: 7). The other one throws the heart into slavery and in other bad occupations. This one he uses everything he had towards building, the other one uses everything to weaken up them who choose him. This one is full of wisdom, for he believes that Him Who looks at his hidden passions He can heals his passion too; the other one will get filled up with insanity, either he is healed of not. This one is full of a state of peace and he teaches the people not to get idle. The other one is disturbed. One pushes the people to walk through countries and cities, the second one deliver the people of everything. One throws the sadness within heart, and that makes the heat to melt down; the second, throws within heart the gratitude which usefully mediates the people's salvation to the Great Doctor Who bears our sufferings (Isa. 53: 4)[936].

I, my beloved brother, in my idleness from yore, I didn't show myself to any doctor, neither did I put some medicine on my wounds, but not out of virtues, but because of my laziness, because I avoided to walk through villages and cities and to burden somebody by making him to take care of me, the worthless, because I feared the answer I was to give at that time which all of us are wanting for, to my enemies. Blessed is him who can endure, for he makes himself partaker to the patience of Job.

I think that there are many women too, which persevered in enduring their bodily pains, for they left everything in God's care, so that I am ashamed to call myself a man. That one that suffered of a spilling of blood, by forsaking also her thinking from before, after she saw that the bodily doctors could do nothing for her, despite she spent everything she had with them, she impropriated another thinking and she ran to the Great and Spiritual heavenly Doctor Who heals both the souls

[935] There is a raising up of the head as sign of hope and prayer, and not as sign of pride. There is a daring towards God as sign of trusting Him. Contrary to this raising there is a bowing down of the head in the sense of the fatalistic submission to the nature's laws, to the passions, of the obedience to people, and of the lack of hope.

[936] Christ suffered on the cross, out of love for us, and He remains full of the same mercy, so He cannot but suffer for us in continuation. This is the sole mode which you can relieve others pains through, especially those pains united with the will of not remaining in passions. That's why Christ is our true Doctor.

and the bodies. And her illness ran away from her scared by the commandment (Mt. 9: 20-22). And the Canaanite woman left the world's people, the sorcerers, the fortunetellers, because she saw the uselessness of their craftsmanships, and she came to the Master, shouting out at Him: "Have mercy on me, You Son of David" (Mt. 15: 21); and from an edge of the earth to another it was heralded to anybody that what the loving-of-people Doctor did to her. I leave aside the other examples and I limit myself to these two examples, by thinking only at the fact that I could somewhere in the future to reach their faith, in order I to me found worthy of happiness. This is because these two women are enough to me to make me feel shame, and that's why I do not need to mention the faith and the humbleness of the centurion, who not only didn't allow the doctors and others in order him to come to the Master, but he also reckoned himself as unworthy of bringing the Master in his house, but he only told to the Master with faith: "Tell me only with Your word and my servant will be healed" (Mt. 8: 8). His great faith was praised even by our Savior. And I am telling these examples in order to shame myself up. This is because I have no desire, I do not aspire to, I do not strive for, I do not fall at the feet of the Lord and I do not think, me the worthless one, at that moment which the condemnation will reach me at, when the scary angel will come to take my wicked soul, when the door will be locked and I will remain outside with the five virgins and nobody will hear me anymore[937] (Mt. 25: 10-11). And the fact that these ones are biting me even from now, it is obvious. And it is not a secret that I am defeated by idleness and laziness. But what will I do? Will I despair? May that not be[938]! This is because the despair is a deadly sin. Cry for me, brother, and shed bitter tears over me, as over a cadaver and as over a stinky tomb. This is for I know that those are very useful[939], as we have been

[937] It is a great comforting somebody to hear you when you are in pains and to commiserate with you, and it is the biggest unhappiness you not to be heard by anyone, and nobody to want to hear you or to commiserate with you. This is the hell, without any light. You have been despising everyone, so that you will be forgotten by anyone. You have accustomed yourself not to trust anyone, the gate to communion with everyone it will be locked up in front of you, because yourself have locked your own gate and you are no longer able to open it up. Your door is stiffened in the locked-up position. And you have lost the keys.

[938] How difficult is one to escape from his spiritual idleness! What a steadfast effort one requires for doing that!

[939] The together-suffering of another, with me; only the pain of another can invigorate me, it can bring me to life out of the death of the idleness and of the indifference.

taught by the teaching of the crying of Peter[940]. And pray for me, because I am telling you all of these but I do nothing good. So that the good Doctor to have mercy on me and Him to heal the illnesses of my soul and of my body. His to be the glory forever. Amen.

533. Question: Lo, I am surrendering myself to God and in your hands. Take care of me, you merciful Father, for the Lord.

Answer: Brother, if you believe so, you won't be forsaken by Christ Who said to the sinner woman: Your faith has saved you" (Lk. 8: 48). So, leave everything to God's care. This is for God takes care of us. His to be the glory forever. Amen.

534. Question: A brother asked the same Oldman, saying: If somebody suffers of an illness that requires a surgical procedure, must him allow himself to be operated? And must he do that with the counsel of the Fathers?

Answer: he who suffers of any illness must ask someone among the Fathers about that illness, and he must do everything according to the advices he will receive. This is for, sometimes, there happens that some Father has a charisma which can heal the brother even without noticing it. And one doesn't need the bodily doctors in all circumstances.

535. Question: Although it seems to me a good thing I to restrain myself, or I to leave in ascesis into quietude, or to do something good to somebody, should I do that by my own, or should I ask for the advice of the Fathers before doing that>

Answer: Not asking the Fathers for advice before doing something that seems to be good, it will lead the final things to evil. And doing so he will transgress the commandment that says: "Son, do everything with advice" (Prov. 24: 72) and: "ask

[940] The another's pain for me it can wake up me too, to feel the pain for my wickedness, as Peter was brought to crying when he saw that Christ was to receive the death for him and for all the people.

your father and he will teach you; ask your old men and they will tell you" (The Second Law 32: 7). You won't find anywhere in the Scripture any command that somebody to do something by his own. This is because not asking from advice is pride. And by doing that one has God as enemy. And "God opposed to the proud ones, and God give grace to the humble" (Prov. 3: 34). And who else is humble except him who bow down his head before the old men and he asks for their advice in the fear of God[941]?

536. Question: If somebody was suspected as bring a heretic, btu he confesses the right-faith, would him be believed or not?

Answer: The Fathers didn't ask except for the right confession of the faith. So, if somebody truly shows himself blaspheming Christ with his mouth, and by living outside Christ, that one must be avoided and you must not get close to him. But we must look at his heart too. This is for everyone who doesn't keep Christ's commandments, he will be a heretic. And if the man doesn't believe in his heart, his words will be useless[942].

[941] It is easy to say that you bow down in front of God, but you do not do that in front of the people. By saying that you do that what God tells you to do, you actually do that what it seems to you that God is telling you. This is the sin of the Protestantism. Then, even though the Protestant believer says that he humbles himself, by reckoning that everything good comes exclusively from God, in this rather is a predestinationist, which the man is required nothing in, because of being denied any freedom of the man to do the evil, when God has chosen that man to do the good through him. The man cannot even humble himself. The true humbleness consists of "cutting off your will" which God leaves is to you. And you must cut off you will not by thinking that you cut off your will in front of the unseen God, but without being you sure of that, but you must cut off your will in front of him who gives you and advice in the name of the Lord. Only so you will really cut off your will. And you cut off your will being conscious that you do that in front of God Whose presence is witnessed to you by somebody else who helps you to show, objectively, the cutting off of you will. God doesn't want to allow His presence to get evaporated into your subjectivity, but God wants to make His presence and His will as felt objectively through somebody else who has his conscience strengthened by the churchly community started by Apostles, the conscience that he talks to you in the name of God.

[942] He who has the faith into Christ as a theory and he doesn't draw out of his faith any conclusion for his life, namely he has a faith lacking its spirituality, because of not having him a spiritual life, he will have a faith lacking its living core or its fructifying core, so that he will be a heretic too, according to Barsanuphius, because of him rather compromising the faith than serving the faith and defending the faith.

537. Question: If a certain Abba argues in favor of a heresy, must a brother leave that Abba[943]?

Answer: If he is surely proven that he sustains a heresy, the brother must leave that old man. But if that is only a hunch, the brother must not leave him, neither must the brother start examining the old man. This is for the hidden things are known only to God, while the shown things are known by people too.

538. Question: If Abba believes rightly, but the brother expects that some heresy is going to start there, and the fear of transgressing the right-faith gets born within the brother, and Abba doesn't' want to leave together with the brother for another place to live, and because of that, the brother, by knowing his weakness, he wants to leave for another place, will him do good or bad[944]?

Answer: Before being shown that that heresy is imposed forcedly, one must not leave, lest will be fulfilled with him the word: "The miscreant runs away, being banished by nobody" (Prov. 28: 1). And if it becomes obvious that that heresy is imposed forcedly, the brother will have to leave only with the counsel of his spiritual Fathers and in the fear of God.

539. Question: What one should do if there were not some old men whom the brother can trust to that they can discern the things? Should that brother leave for the danger of the heresy and him to go elsewhere, where there are old men able to discern and him to ask those fathers about that?

Answer: Yes, let him to that and let him fulfill the things said to him by those.

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[943] Here is about an old man who is served by a brother.

[944] In the majority of the monasteries from Palestine, at that time, there occurred Origenistic strife, and sometimes, in some monasteries, the Origenism conquered the majority of their inhabitants.

540. Question: If somebody among the Fathers accompanies me and he quarrels with me because he wants to carry my burden, and that is inappropriate and that doesn't build up them who see that, because he is superior to me, why should I do on such occasion?

Answer: Prostrate yourself in front of him with humbleness, and ask for you to be the one carrying that burden. If he doesn't accept that, you will prostrate in front of him for the second time, and you will tell him: "Forgive me, for the lord, but we cannot go ahead together. This is because it caused offense to the who see us". And if he quarrels even after that, you won't insist anymore because of being that a game of the devil.

541. Question: Wouldn't that be more useful it I stopped arguing and if I let him carry the burden, even thought that would offend the people seeing us? I ask that because here it seems that the quarrel is worse than letting him carry the burden. And between two evil things, maybe one must choose the smallest.

Answer: The quarrel that continues after prostration is proven to be from the devil. And one must not continue quarreling. This is because the Fathers say that the superfluous things are from the devils (Paterikon, Poemen: 129).

542. Question: A brother asked the Great Oldman, if it will be useful to the brother to accompany him (to live in withdrawal)?

Answer: he who wants to walk of the way to God, let him not ask honor for himself. This is because, what is the way to God if not one throwing his will behind him in everything, and him reckoning himself as the las one and the least one among all[945]? Only one like that will be able to walk on this way. This is

[945] He who reckons himself the least among those who reckon themselves as great, he will be in communication with the imperishable and truly existing being of God. He who doesn't' search for the soap bubble of the passing honor, he will be dressed up in the honor of the

because him who doesn't cut off his will and who doesn't place his trust into the Lord, he won't be able to walk this way. With that one will be fulfilled the word of the Gospel: "Search for, and you will find, known and it will be open to you" (Mt. 7: 7). These are the live and the salvation which one just aspire to, in order him to achieve them.

543. Question: What should I do, Father, because of being I tormented by the wars gathering against me? Tell me which is the sign that I trust God and which is the sign of the forgiveness of my sins? And how must I sit within my monastic cell according to the will of God?

Answer: Brother, the time of the wars is a time for working. Do not get yourself weak, but work and fight. When the war corners you up, you too must press upon that war, by shouting out: "Lord Jesus Christ, see my helplessness and my trouble, and help me and escape me from those who persecute me, for I have run to You!" And pray for you to be given power to serve God into a clean heart.

The sign that somebody trusts God it is him to shake off all his thoughts and all his worries about his body (2 Cor. 7: 1), and him not to imagine that he has at all anything of this life, because of otherwise he would trust the things of this world and not God[946]. Abd the sign of the forgiveness of his sins somebody has it in that that he hates his sins and he no longer commits those sins. This is because, as long as he still cogitates at his sins, and as long as his heart feel pleasure for those sins, that is a sign that his sins haven't been yet forgiven because of still being him kept by his sins[947].

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imperishable godlike shininess. Such a man advances on the way to God, the only true subsistence. That one cuts off his will enslaved by the appearance of reality of some smokes.

[946] You trust that what you reckon that you will have forever. But what you can trust for eternity in this world? This is because, anything you have in this world, it has an end sooner or later. You cannot lean forever on anything or on anybody from this world. This is because of being everything in a continuous collapsing.

[947] Your sins will have been forgiven if you have truly asked for you to be forgiven of your sins. And you have truly asked for your sins to be forgiven, when you will no longer enjoy living in those sins or you to continue committing those sins. If you still enjoy committing those sins, it will mean that those sins are still imprinted into your being, so that those sins haven't been erased from your being, because of you not wanting to powerfully ask for those sins to be truly erased from you. If you continue to be attached to a sin, that sin won't be

And sitting within your monastic cell by the will of God, it means condemning yourself as much as you can, with your heart, when you see something beautiful within your monastic cell, or for any cause of bodily resting, by saying: "Woe to me, the sinner, because of seeing around me relieves which condemn me, because of not being I worthy of those, and other who are worthy of those are tormented by traveling and not finding bodily resting[948]. Lor Jesus Christ forgive me for this, for Your name called upon us". May the Lord strengthen you, son, and may the Lord give you power for you to progress and to reach the consummate measure.

544. A brother askes the other Oldman, John: Father, pray for me, for the lord. And tell me whether is it good us to ask the Fathers for many times to pray for us, even if they assured us previously that they do that? Wouldn't us seem to temp them by doing so?

The answer of John: Brother, I wrote to you for many times about the prayer, that in the virtue of the commandment of God we owe to pray for one another. And especially when we are asked for doing that, we will even more debtors to do that. This is for we cannot but put the whole our power into this[949].

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forgiven to you. The man isn't washed up like an object, but he is a subject who washes himself too with the water flowing from above and who wants himself too for his heart to get softened by the mercy shown him by God.

[948] He who has a peaceful monastic cell and he find in that monastic cell the resting form the bodily worries, he must condemn himself if he doesn't succeed to appease himself, because despite having all the conditions he doesn't use that for his progress in the union with God through prayer, and so he proves himself as being unworthy of those conditions, while others could use those conditions better, for they are worthy of those conditions, but they do not benefit of such conditions. This means using the resting of the sitting 3within the monastic cell according to the will of God. Let the one sitting within his monastic cell not be satisfied only with his bodily resting.

[949] God wants us to pray for one another, for though this, by not despising God as the spring of all the gifts, we also show our love for one another, as God wants us to. This is for I must not remain indifferent to the salvation of others, while being I interested only in my own salvation, like I also must not take care only of my bread, while being I indifferent to the misery of others. But I must be all the more interested in their eternal life than in their perishable life. That's why we need also to ask other for praying for us, and not only us to grant them our prayers. This is for by that, we also show our humbleness and the fact that we need their love. By doing so we will show God that we too need others' love, as they need ours. God created us so: for us to love on one another, by seeing within us our need for love and for being loved. That's why we must pray for others much more than they ask us for

And asking for the prayers of our Fathers, it is very useful. This is for he says: "Pray for one another" (Jas. 5: 16). And again: "Not the healthy ones need the doctor, but the ill ones do" (Lk. 5: 31). And we must not forget to remember about the daring of the widow in front of the unjust judge (Lk. 18: 108). And if our heavenly Father knows the things we need even before we to ask for Him for them, why He didn't' say to us: "Do not ask for them, for I know what you need even before you ask for it"? But Himself said: "Ask for and you will take" (Jn. 16: 24)[950]. So, it is goof us to ask for, in order us to receive His promise. And by asking for the prayer of Abba, you will say thus: "Abba, I feel bad, pry for me, for I kn0ow that I need the help from God". And God will have mercy on you as He wills. For His is the love for people, and His is the glory forever. Amen.

545. Question: If somebody eats at the table and he gets satisfied more quickly, will it be good for him to ask Abba to get up, or will he have to sit until everybody will get up? Is it good one who taste of all the meals, or not? What is it better?

Answer: If one sits at the table and he feels that he has fulfilled his need for food, and he cannot sit there without continuing eating, he will ask for being allowed to leave. But sitting there without eating will be the best. And it will be better if one shares his bread will all the foods than not to do so.

546. Question: Two brothers who wanted to restrain themselves, they asked Abba if he would allow them to leave the table before other brothers, because if the kept sitting at the table they wouldn't be able to control their stomach. And Abba gave them permission to do so, but some other brothers judged them

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doing it. We have proven ourselves more insensitive when others have asked for our love but we haven't given it to them, than when we have reckoned that other haven't needed our love so that we haven't showed our love to them.

[950] Our heavenly Father knows what we need even before we to ask for it. Still, He wants us to ask for what we need and He doesn't give us that what we need without us asking for it. This is for we must become aware of the fact that we need those things and that we cannot receive those things except from Him. He wants an affectionate relationship with us which we to be active partners in. Vainly somebody will offer me his love if I do not need his love and I do not try to get it. Only by being I offered God's love, I won't come to the true love without accepting God's love.

and defamed them, because of not being they able to understand the benefit of such deed. That's why the sent to ask the same Oldman about that situation.

Answer: Thos brothers, as some workers and carers of they souls, they do this by fighting for restraint, lest, by sitting to crave for more food. This is for it is characteristic only to them who are consummate to sit at the table without being they defeated by their stomach. But you are vain in your mind, because of not taking heed at the word of the Fathers who said: "Do not tell, what is this for? But you rather must to take heed at yourself". The Fathers also urge us not to gossip on anybody, but us to fulfill the prophetic word: "Let my mouth not to speak about people's deeds" (Ps. 16: 4[951]). But you have fallen under the condemnation that says: "The evil man gets his things out of his evil treasury" (Mt. 12: 35). Why haven't you rather think at the good things of those brothers, which are towards building up, by saying: "We are indifferent, while these brothers of ours, they restraint themselves", as these brothers who left the table thought about you the good things, saying: "Woe to us, because we leave the table because of our helplessness, while our brothers, even though they eat more than we eat, they won't get harmed. This is for they do everything with right-reckoning. BY that they run away from the menace of the condemnation that says: "Do not judge, so you not to be judged" (Mt. 7: 1). And you fall into it because of judging your brothers who are superior to you, and because you transgress the word of the Apostle who says: "Him who eats, let him not despise him who doesn't eat" (Rom. 14: 3). You who eat more than those two brothers of yours, so that you owe more than they, you should on one hand to get sadder as one who are defeated by their stomach, and on the other hand you should thank God more for food. And so, God can set you free, through the thanks given Him by you, from the war of your belly and from condemning your brothers. And if you want to understand, the things themselves lead one

[951] In KJB we have: Ps. 17: 3-4: "Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing; I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress. // Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer."; in ROB we have: Ps. 16: 3-4: "You have examined my heart, during night You have examined it; you have cleaned me up with fire, but there was not injustice within me. // In order my mouth not to speak human things, for the words of Your lips I have guarded harsh ways." (E. l. t.'s n.)

to the right-reckoning, by helping him to discern between good and bad[952], according to the Apostle's word who says: "Try everything, but choose the good" (1 Thes. 5: 21). But for the decision belong to Abba, the things decided by him it must be accepted without any opposition.

547. A brother asked the Great Oldman, saying: I have dogmatic books and by reading them my mind is moved from the passionate thoughts to the thinking at that what I read in those books. But sometimes my thought rebukes me, saying: "You must not read this kind of books, for you are inexperienced and unclean".

The answer of Barsanuphius: I haven't wanted to occupy myself with such books because they elevate the mind to the high things, but I have been occupying myself with the "Word of the Old Men" (Paterikon), for they humble the mind. But I am not saying this because I disrespect those dogmatic books, but I am telling this in order to advise you. This is for there is eating and there is delectation[953].

548. A foreign brother got sick, and he came to take care of his health into monastery[954]. And being him given to dwell in the monastic cell of a brother, but that brother wasn't content of receiving him. And the Oldman found out about that and he said that brother the followings:

Answer: Examine your through, brother, and realize it: If that brother was your brother according to the body, wouldn't you receive him and take care of him as for the apple of your

[952] The things themselves lead to a kind of union among people and between them and God, as the things also lead one to discern between good and bad. So, he who eat more, if he thanks God he will be redeemed from his covetousness, and he will understand them who have left the table earlier, by taking in account the restraint which those ones have submitted themselves to. But this will take place only if the people tolerate on one another.

[953] I do not want to walk with my mind among the high realities. This is for I do not feel myself worthy of that. I gain more by humbling myself. This is for reading the words of the psalms is a food necessary to the soul, in order I to get cleaned of my passions. Reading the dogmatic books is a delectation, but it is not a necessary food.

[954] One can see that in the monastery there was an infirmary, as we can see also out of the "Teaching of Abba Dorotheos" (*The Romanian Philokalia,* volume IX).

eye? So, take care of yourself because you are dominated by bodily thoughts. You have been given to receive your spiritual brother. This is for all of us are one into Christ. So, take heed at yourself, brother, into the fear of God.

After the brother heard these, we repented very much and by benefitting of that teaching, he said to the Oldman: "forgive me, Abba, and pray for me. I receive my brother with great joy".

549. A brother, who was a disciple of the same Great Oldman before the Oldman withdrew himself in order to appease himself into monastery, that brother left for abroad. And when that brother turned back, he was despising a pious brother for his simplicity and unimportance. But he also insisted in asking the Oldman dot guide him as before, saying: God brought me again to your holiness.

The answer of Barsanuphius: The Apostle says: "The Kingdom of God doesn't consist of word" (1 Cor. 4: 20). And Abba Makarios said: "Him who believes and works rightly, Jesus won't surrender him in the hands of the devils". And the Lord said: "during the days of Elijah many widows were in Israel and he wasn't sent but to that from the Sarepta of Sidon (who was a pagan) (Lk. 4: 25-26). And he said again: "During the says of Elisha many leppers were in Israel but none of them had been cleaned, except Naaman the Syrian" (Lk. 4: 25-27), despite he was a foreigner. This was for he believed. I reckoned that, by living for abroad, you will forsake your habit of justifying yourself and so you will gain the humbleness[955]. But as I see out of your thoughts, you are the same, or even worse. And if God chose the crazy ones, the weak ones, and He disregarded ones of the world, it will be obvious that God rejected the things glorified and praised by people (1 Cor. 1: 27-28). So, not they who are pleasant to the people will be pleasant to God, but they who are unpleasant to people will be pleasant to God for they are searching for God, and the have their happiness in front of God. This is for it was said: "Blessed you will be when they persecute you and when they will hate you and they will speak

[955] The self-justification is the justification of the sins, so that it is the contrary to admit or to confess or to repent for the sins. At the basis of the self-justification stays the pride.

evil of you, for My name. Rejoice and be glad, for they did the same to your parents" (Mt. 5: 10-12).

You have been growing up next to me, not for a short time. Examine your heart! What word or advice have you received from us which got you far from the way to God? And the protection that was over you, where did that come from? Not from the trouble you were bearing? This is for the Oldman helped you for your benefit[956]. Tell me, brother, Does God take care of the things form the beginning of the man of does He take care of the last things before the man exiting this life[957]? D you see that what you have earned while living abroad? And you also know that when you were living together with me, yore, I told you that if you listen to me in one thing but you resist me in some other thing, even in that thing which you obey me you will actually do your will, so that I won't be able to defend you at judgment[958].

If God has brought you here, God too will be the One guiding you. And if you have come here according to your will, it is written that: "I send to them according to the craftsmanships of their hearts" (Ps. 80: 10). But pray for me. And do not worry about me. For I too want to be worriless in everything[959].

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[956] The Greek word used in the original text has in the first place the meaning: "he persecuted you", by submitting you to troubles, and by watching your progress. This is one of the growing up through harshness, in order to strengthen the spiritual son. Letting the spiritual son to get drowsy and satisfying all his desires, it will lead to make him weak.

[957] God wants us to use our earthly life in order us to progress sin good, in order us to get ever consummate through our efforts. God isn't content about us being good in the beginning but we get less goof while advancing into life, so that we would reach to be totally evil at the end of our life. That's why we have been given the time of our life. The positive purpose of the movement of our being it has been theologically explained by Saint Maximos the Confessor in his word "Ambigua".

[958] If the disciple fulfills on one occasion the will of his spiritual father but he doesn't do the same on some other occasion, it will show that the disciple has chosen, each time, whether or not he has wanted to fulfill what he has been asked for. So, even when he has chosen to fulfill a certain request, he has been fulfilling his won will. He has been choosing what request to fulfill, according to his own will. And about the things done by disciple according to his own will, the spiritual father won't be requested to express his opinion, either good or bad, because of being those deeds committed on the ground of his disciple's will and not on the ground of the father's will.

[959] If the father didn't pray for this disciple as well, the father would bear the worry for not accomplishing his duty by doing everything he could for his disciple. But the father gets rid of that worry, for he prays for him who is given in his care.

550. Some of the brothers, by getting out of monastery, they bought monastic cells in places which were close to the monastery, but they didn't' ask Abba (Seridos) for permission to do that. And Abba got upset with them, because they transgressed the order, so that Abba wanted to banish them away form there. And they tried to resist him. And the same Oldman was asked about that situation, of the brother did good or wrong. And what should be done?

Answer: We see everywhere that the "standing against" lost many people. For instance, they who were around Datan and Aviron and who rebelled against Moses (Num. 16). And that what has happened now it is bad sign. This is because they haven't renounced to their decision when asked by Abba to do so, and therefore who will be able to convince them? And if somebody doesn't allow himself to be persuaded it is a sign of thoughts rebellion. And the rebellion is out of the urge form the devil. This is because the devil has been rebelling since the beginning, and they who do the same thing, they will become his sons. And what will happen to them? These ones have got themselves out of humbleness[960], by covering up their ears in order they not to hear Him Who says: "If they banish you away from this city, you will leave for another city" (Mt. 10: 23); and: "Him who wants to go to suit you and to take your coat away from you, leave him your shirt too" (Mt. 5: 40)[961].

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[960] "They exiled themselves due to their humbleness". Remaining into humbleness means remaining in accord to the will of God and so in communication with God. The opposition between you will interrupt the communication. But our will is made to remain in accord to Him Who has created us; This is because not were not us who created Him. And by creating us, God wanted the best for our nature, He wanted that what our true nature will chose too. The accord with His will keeps us in communication with Him Who our will come out of, and it upholds our life.

The will that upholds our life it is that will that remains in accord with the will of God. This is our will conforms to our being. The will that is contrary to God it is also contrary to us. The will contrary to is it chews away our being, it keeps our being into a poverty and into a torment. The great mystery is that God allows us also the possibility of a will of ours that is contrary to our being, and this is for God doesn't want to destroy us, neither God wants to bring us to the state of some objects. And thus, God allows our being to coexist with a weakened, crooked being of ours, but still an existing being. And this is a mode which the relativity of our being is shown through, and the relativity of the entire created existence, and the possibility of the accompanying between it and a non-full and tormented state of the created existence.

[961] These quotes are given in order us to avoid resistance.

But these ones obeyed the evil[962]. And the evil gives birth to no good. This is for he says: "The bad tree won't bring fort good fruits" (Mt. 7: 18). And they have transgressed the rule of the Fathers in their disobedience. This is because the Fathers say that, if you leave for a certain place and you dwell there, you should ask, in the first place, if somebody will get upset with you about that. And if the Fathers command this when it comes about the upset of others, all the more this thing will cause sadness to the hegumen. Thus, this thing must be ended, so that they who have mistaken to take other together with them[963] and to beg their Abba to forgive them and not to rewards their evil with evil. This is for it was written: "we the strong one must bear the weaknesses of the helpless ones" (Rom. 15: 1). And our Lord also says: "If you don't forgive their mistakes to the people, neither you Father Who is in heavens will forgive your mistakes" (Mt. 6: 15); and again: "Be consummate as your Father from heavens consummate is" (Mt. 5: 48). And so will God be glorified, for this will be towards the building up of many.

551. The Abba of the monastery where the holy Fathers dwelled, he was hesitating to do something. And some of the brothers who wanted that thing, they endured that hesitation with difficulty, and they were speaking against. And the Great Oldman found out about that and he gave to them this answer:

Answer: Brothers, our Lord said: "My sheep listen to My voice and they follow Me (Lk. 10: 27). So, if there is somebody a true disciple, he will obey his Abba in everything, all the way to death. And through everything Abba does, the disciple gets built up and he doesn't dare to make differences in the things told him by Abba, neither the disciple dares to ask; "What is this

[962] He who resists, he obeys the evil. That one has exited the good, or the possibility of communication and of agreement.

[963] It is recommended that other who did not mistake to Abba, to pray for they who did. Here we have a motif for which we ask for the prayer of the saints for us. If him who didn't mistake prays for him who mistook, his deed of love will be united with a deed of humbleness, by reckoning that brother who mistook as still worthy of forgiveness, as worthy of being imparted with the happiness of the others. This is a solidarity among people that is pleasant to God. This is for God wants the whole creation to be reunited in the happiness from within Him, also by the efforts of the creation too.

for? What is the purpose of this?". This is because, if he did that, he would no longer be a disciple of Abba, but a judge. All of this come only out of the worst will of the man[964].

So, if Abba tells somebody to do something, and that disciple resists it, it will be obvious that that disciple wants to impede that thing to be done and he empties of power the word of Abba. Sucha disciple must thing who sis his Abba: that one whose word was impeded, or that one whose word has been fulfilled? So, if the disciple wants to do his will, he will be the son of the devil. And anyone who does the will of such a disciple, he too will do the will of the devil[965].

And even the disciple fulfills his will, he won't reach the peace either on this way. This is because what is there within except the disobedience that is destruction to the soul[966]?

So, if somebody sees himself being offended by his Abba, he ought to leave his Abba, so that he won't lose his soul and he won't bear the guilt for the condemnation of the other whom he has twisted their minds, because he doesn't' know if Abba was right or wrong, but he gets offended purposelessly, by the sake of his won will. And if he has done his will, he won't become more righteous than Abba. And if he knows better than his

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[964] If by being separated the man's will from the will of God, the man gets out of the communication with God and out of the will according to his own being, likewise, through the separation of the monk's will from the abbot's will – the abbot being the one guiding the monk on behalf of God – the monk will exit the communication with the abbot or the unity between him and the other dweller of that community. By that, even the unity of the monastery will fall apart; the monastery was founded by Christendom as an oasis progressed in that unity which God wants to lead the people in. The division among people is caused by their evil will, a will upheld by their pride, a will upheld by their egotistic care for himself, of each one of them.

[965] It is the will of the devil because of parting the man from another man, namely it gets the people out of unity. Through this proud will the people get divided and they fight one another, because they do not think at God in Whom they must get united.

[966] He who wants to fulfill his will that is contrary to Abba's will, he won't have peace either when he starts resisting or when he sees his will fulfilled. This is because, in the last case, he has committed the separation between him and Abba and that won't bring him peace. But also, until fulfilling his own will he is in the agitated tension of the disobedience. That is a disturbance that doesn't allow him to peacefully think at God, or to pray. Therefore, that means the perdition of the soul, because the soul will be dead without the communication with God. That's why him who doesn't bring his will in accord to Abba's will, he will better leave than fulfill his won will, by bringing to the end, and therefore to perdition, his opposition, and dragging others too to rebellion, namely to the perdition which he will be held accountable for, at the final judgment. Neither must him remain in monastery, because by constantly opposing to Abba he will drag others too to opposition. This is because by that they will work a division that comes from the devil.

Abba that what is useful, why will he still remain his Abba's disciple? Let him leave and teach others.

Do not allow yourselves to be deceived by the devil, so that you to preserve your will towards your harm. And it will never be fulfilled the will of yours.

Brothers, I have written you in order to spare you, and God know this very well. If somebody accepts these, that will be him towards his salvation. And if he doesn't accept these, let him spit on the written things, it he wishes so. This stays in his power. That is what some of you have already done within their hearts. And others even slandered us with their mouths. Forgive me!

552. The Answer of the same Great Oldman towards someone among the Fathers who asked him if he must rebuke his disciple who opposes him by word.

Beloved brother, you must know that the time is bad (Eph. 5: 16). That's why there are witnesses that rebuking in order to correct it is good. This is for he says: "Whom God loves He rebukes him" (Prov. 3: 12; Hebr. 12: 6). And again: "Blessed is that man whom the Lord rebukes (Jas. 5: 16). The brother is warred by the callousness of his heart. Suffer him and toil together with him[967]. But, in the same time "reproach him, rebuke him, and urge him" (2 Tim. 2: 4), according to Apostle's word. And if he accepts this rebuking, he will be gained again. Wake him up out of his deep sleep of the callousness of his heart[968]. This is because if his skin gets thickened by thorns, it will become to himself a big and insupportable pain[969]. But if he toils to pluck off his thorns until they still are soft, he will be quickly delivered form this passion. But if the fabric of thorns

[967] In the French translation: "Suffer together with him". Actually, the toil is a suffering. The spiritual father toils and suffers together with his spiritual son who fights his helplessness of not contradicting the old man.

[968] The callousness of the heart is like a deep sleep. It is a big insensitivity. He offends another without feeling the pain he causes him.

[969] The callousness of the heart is like a skin, or it is like a fabric knitted out of thorns, and that makes the heart, on one hand insensitive, while on the other hand by pricking others with its thorns it will bring suffering to him and to those pricked by him. This is because his offenses will be answered with offenses as well. And this will help the man to liberate himself of that.

gets strengthened, those thorns will be plucked only with toil and pain. So, tell him to take heed at himself with much care.

553. The answer of the same Great Oldman towards a brother who was working as carpenter in monastery and he was warred by diverse thoughts and he reckoned that he benefitted nothing out of his work and he had not help.

Brother, we ourselves are those ones who do not want to be delivered from hard days and from heavy annoyances. This is for God have given two gifts to the people, which the people can deliver and save themselves through, of all the passions of the former man: the humbleness and the obedience. But we do not impropriate those, neither we want to live in those, nor we want to cross through them in order us to find help, in order us to get rid of evils and us to attach ourselves to Jesus[970] through those ones, for He is the Great Doctor Who wants to heal us of the fever of our passions. Why do you pile up all the evils into your treasury, so that you get disturbed and restless? Stop yourself from being furious, angry, and envious. You must know that those do not enjoy honor, but dishonor. Leave all your cunningness and bend down you head into humbleness and obedience, and you will find mercy. If you do what you hear with humbleness and with obedience, the Lord will bring through your hands, to a good result, not only your present work, but all your works. This is for the Lord guards the path of them who fear Him, and He covers their roads. Why do you get upset, and why do you doubt? The mercy of God will help you if you persevere in the patient waiting for God. You must die, you the miserable one, towards any man. Tell to your thought: "Who am I? Dust and ashes" (Gen. 18: 27). "I am a dog". Say: "I have nothing forever". Why are you prophesizing your perdition and why you don't fear God? Aren't you ashamed to say: "I have received not help?"[971]. Satan blinds our heart up by leading you

[970] The humbleness makes transparent the greatness of God. The unconditional obedience wakes up within heart the sentiment of the connection to God.

[971] We often deplore the fact that God hasn't helped us to succeed to become better, or that we haven't felt God's presence or His power. And this throws us into a bit sadness, sometimes almost into despair. But right the hardships coming upon us are means allowed by God in order us to advance into good by patience. Why do we blame God because of the fact that we do not open our eyes so see His presence and the help from Him?

to ingratitude, so that you say that you benefit nothing in this place. You unwise man! If you were not guarded by the hand of God and by the prayers of the saints from here, where would you be? In the "outer darkness" (Mt. 8: 20). Where could you benefit otherwise? Nowhere. But the devil, by wanting to get you out of the love for the saints, from under their cover and benefits, he sows within you the seed of the death towards perdition, so that you will totally end up in the hands of the enemies of the truth and they to tear apart your lamb, namely your soul. Guard yourself against despising or mocking on somebody. This is because by doing so, your enemies will catch you in their traps, by disturbing you; they will harm you, they will get you out of quietude and peace, out of good order and out of the whole good. Forsake those and follow my words and I will bear your burden[972]. And you will find help and mercy and salvation to your soul. We get saved by toiling, brother. Guar yourself strongly against saying: "What is this for? Why don't have I the same things as those ones have?". Do you little handwork zealously, and in the fear of God. This is for you will be rewarded abundantly for it. And to not despair about yourself. Your desperation is the joy of the devil, that may God not give it to him, but may God rather haggle for your salvation[973], into Christ Jesus our Lord Whom to be the glory forever. Amen.

554. The same brother asked the other Oldman: my thought tells me: "If you want to be saved, get out of monastery and live in ascesis in the quietude which the Fathers spoke about" (Paterikon, Sentence 274; Les sentences the Pères du désert, Solesmes, 1966, p. 180, no. 47). This is for I do not benefit here out of this craftsmanship as carpenter. This is because much disturbance and trouble come to me out of it.

[972] The Oldman bears that one's burden but with the condition to have him near to himself with his soul, so that he won't feel the whole burden anymore.

[973] The devil is jealous on that love which the soul unites through, with Christ. That is the envy of him who cannot master upon the man for the man loves Christ. Because the devil is incapable of loving, he cannot have the joy of being loved by anybody. The devil wants to make the people too as incapable of love and tormented by that state. That's why the devil laments when seeing two mans loving on one another cleanly and steadfastly. And the devil will do everything to divide them.

The answer of John: Brother, I showed you before that it is not useful to you to get out of monastery. Not I am telling you that if you get out, you will reach your perdition. So, you know what you have to do. If you truly want to be saved, you must achieve humbleness, submission, and obedience, namely cut off your will and "you will live in heavens and on earth" (Mt. 6: 19)[974].

Regarding the quietude which the Fathers speak about, you do not known what that is like, as many do not know too. This is for such a quietude doesn't mean keeping your silence with your mouth. For there is some people who speak tens of thousands of useful words and that is reckoned to him as silence. And there is another uttering a sole vain word and that it will be reckoned to him as he would trampled on all the teachings of our Savior[975]. This is for Himself said: "You will answer on the day of the judgment for any vain word that has come out of your mouth" (Mt. 12: 36). And because you have said: "I do not benefit out of my carpentry", believe me, brother, that you do not know whether you benefit of it or not, but the devils mock you and they show to your thought that what they want to, in order you to do your will and you to disobey your Fathers' will. This is for him who wants to stay into truth, he will ask the Fathers about him benefiting or not, and he will believe that what they will say him. And thus, he will do that what is beneficial to him. Many paid other people to curse them, so that they would learn how to endure that. And you learn the patience without paying for it, for the Lord tell you: "into your patience you will gain your souls" (Lk. 21: 19). We mut thank him who torment us, for through him we gain our patience. You will sit here, peacefully. May the devil not to tempt you. May the Lord help you. Amen.

[974] This is the true life, when you allow to be done within you, and with you, the will of God, so that you will be in communication with God, and God's life will be overpoured within you and you will live on earth as in heavens. You will no longer be disturbed by any pride, or by any worry about yourself.

[975] Tens of thousands of words highlighting the glory and the untold mystery of God are reckoned as silence, as coming out of the quietude of the heart's deep contemplation. And a superficial word that mocks the mysterious teachings of Christ will be contrary to any quietude and to any view of the unveiled horizons of the silence.

535. A brother asked the same Oldman, saying: For Abba wants to spare me, should I ask him: "Do you command me to do that thing?".

Answer: In order not to put your will in that thing, you will tell him: "What do you command me to do?". This is because him who wants a thing and he asks about that thing, even if he was commanded by another to do that thing, he would bear himself the whole danger for that thing, because he would fulfill his own will[976].

556. Question: But in case that I want something and I do not ask Abba about that, but he commands me from himself I to do that, will that be reckoned to me as own will?

Answer: Tell Abba: "I want to do that thing. What do you command me?". And if he tells you to do it, you will it is going to be done. And if he gives you something else to do, you will receive that too, joyfully[977].

557. Question: And if I do not have the desire to do a certain thing, but I reckon that I can serve Abba by doing that thing, and I talk to Abba about that thing, for I know that Abba likes that thing to be fulfilled, will I be in the state of one who has received the commandment to do that thing? And if by not doing that thing right then, and later on a thought comes to me do fulfill that thing, will I do that thing inappropriately?

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[976] The disciple intuits that Abba would want him d to do a certain thing, but out of gentleness Abba doesn't' want to ask him to do that thing, for Abba wants to defend his disciple against the danger or, eventually, against the temptation related to that thing. The disciple asks the Oldman for the advice if he could ask Abba from himself, if Abba commands him to do that thing. The Olman tells him to only ask generally, if Aba wanted him to do something. This is because if the disciple askes Abba if Abba wanted him do to a certain thing, that would show that the was the disciple's will to do that thing, so that the disciple would bear the responsibility for consequences, even thought he asked Abba for the command him to do it. So, it was recommended the total cutting off of the will regarding anything one should do.

[977] Here is not previously felt a desire of Abba. So that the disciple can show Abba his desire. And if Abba approves that, that will have become Abba's desire. And if Abba commands his disciple to do something else, then his disciple will do that thing.

Answer: You better wait for hearing the commandment form him. And if you see him hesitating whom to command that and you tell him that you want to serve him, it won't be inappropriately. But if you have received a commandment to do something and you haven't fulfilled that thing, you will remember that you haven't fulfilled that. And by fulfilling it, you won't think at it.

558. The Scripture says: "If the thought of the master will climb upon you, you won't leave your place" (Eccl. 10: 4). What does that mean?

Answer: Do not allow him to climb upon you, neither will you talk to him, but you will run to God. This is because, if you want to answer him, you will fall into much-speaking and that will impede you from feeling the prayer's warmth.

559. A brother asked the same Oldman: If I hear that somebody speaks evil about me, what will I do?

Answer: Stand up immediately and say a prayer, firstly for him and then for yourself, saying: "Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on this brother and on me, for I am Your unworthy servant. And shelter us against the evil one, by the prayer of the saints"[978]. Amen.

560. Question: If somebody started to gossip somebody else and I noticed that, what should I do?

Answer: If somebody starts gossiping, you must cut off quickly or to move the word to a useful discussion. But neither will you tarry much in that new subject, lets because of much-speaking him to fall again in gossiping.

[978] The brother is the first one who needs the prayer because of speaking evil about me. But I need that prayer too, in order I not to be stollen by upset against him and because he has found at me something that is not good. But because both of us are unworthy, let's pray the Lord to forgive us for the prayers of the saints, for their love among themselves and for us it is a role-model to the love which we must have for one another.

561. Question: If somebody gossiped another and I listened to that gossip with pleasure, w0oudl I fall under the same condemnation because of that?

Answer: Even the listening with pleasure to a gossip, it is a gossip itself, and it will fall under condemnation.

562. Question: Where the idleness comes from and what should One do when the idleness appeared?

Answer: There is an idleness of the nature because of being tired. And there is an idleness from the devils. If you want to discern between the two sorts of idleness, you will examine then like this: The idleness from the devils occurs within somebody before the time he needs rest. This is because, after he has started working, before he has finished a third of a quarter of that work, his idleness urges him to stop working and to get up. So, one must not accept the urge of this idleness, but he must say a prayer and let him sit and endure. This is for, if the enemy sees the man uttering a prayer because of getting idle, because the enemy doesn't want to offer an occasion for one to pray, the enemy will run away. And the nature's idleness occurs when the man gets tired over his power, and when he forces himself to work more than needed. Thus, the idleness of the nature is born out of the body's helplessness. So, if that was the case, the man should trye his power and he should rest his body in the fear of God.

563. Question: The place itself where the idleness from the devils occurs, it is very hot place, and the idleness is added to that place, and it burdens the man so that the man won't be able to resist both of them. So, should the man leave that place at the time of that war?

Answer; It is good to fight and not leave that place during that war. But if you see yourself getting defeated, by being burdened by tiredness, you will leave that place. And once you have got rid of one of the burdens, you will fight the

idleness itself, by calling the name of God and you will receive His help. But leaving that place because of idleness, that is not a burden, it will bring you even more burden and it will increase that war even more, and it will bring harm to your soul. And by taking the man inti its mastery, it will require great efforts in order the man to get rid of it, even if prayers are uttered for him[979].

564. Question: If out of idleness there was born a sleepiness which impedes me from the work I am doing, should I get up or should continue sitting?

Answer: Get up and do not cease form praying to God and God will banish away your sleepiness through prayer.

565. Question: When an evil thought comes to me, my heart moves against it angrily, so that I feel the need to use my voice as well. And it happens to me do to so even when other people are present. Is that good or not?

Answer: It is not good you to do that, because of being possible that to become a habit of yours, and that to be harmful to the people and offensive to the watchers, but you must call upon the name of God, without disturbance, and that thought will be banished away from you.

566. Question: A brother who left the monastery and who became very weak in his soul, asked the same Oldman, saying: I sinned by making myself the toy of the devils and of my mother. I got out of your cover, of my Fathers. I beg you place me among the beginners who haven't received the schism yet.

[979] That idleness that is not caused by a too big tiredness of the body, it has in it something spiritual and as such it appears as having in itself something from the evil one. I feel an idleness for something when doing that what doesn't cause me a bodily pleasure. It is a sort of self-suggestion that can be defeated by self-suggestion too. That idleness can be defeated by one's will, and it will be proven as coming out of a weak will too.

Answer: It is inappropriate you to ask for being placed among the last ones. This depends on the Abba's judgment. That what you have to do it is to prepare yourself for obedience.

567. Question: The ask of one of the Fathers who were living in quietude (withdrawal) towards the same Oldman: I pray you, Father, pray for me in the name of the Lord, because I am very endangered by my indifference and by the disturbance from the enemy. This is because, if God doesn't give me for your prayers and if God doesn't banish the enemy away, I won't be sure that my boat will reach the shore. But as Moses asked God for not to lose so much people by His anger, likewise you, pious Father, pray for my wicked soul. This is for God is good and God wants to Him asked by saints for the salvation of the souls[980]*. And such an ask if it appropriate to you to do it. Pray Abba too, not to be late in coming and seeing me, For I love him very much. And I need his support as well.*

Answer: If your love wrote about us who are the last among people, that we do not want somebody to be lost, what should you say about Him who sworn on Himself: "I am alive, says the Lord, for I do not want the death of the sinner, but him to turn back and to be alive" (Ezra 18: 23); and about Whom the Apostle confesses too, saying: "Who wants that all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth?" (1 Tim. 2: 4).

[980] It was said before that God rejoices Himself when we pray. Not it is being said that God rejoices Himself when the saints pray for the salvation of the souls. If Christ prays for us and Christ ceaselessly presents to the Father His sacrifice for us, how would not rejoice the Father to see the saints in accord to His Son, and how would Christ not to rejoice seeing them not remaining indifferent that what He does? The salvation consists of the consummation of the people, and the consummation cannot be cogitated without the love among people, without the progress of the people into unity. In the prayer of sone for others, it is shown this interest of ones for others, in that what is most important to them. In prayer are united not only the people among themselves but also with God. Only in God is possible the union of all people to be accomplished, for only His love cover all people. Only out of Christ's love and out of His sacrifice for all people, our reciprocal prayer and sacrifice can be nourished. And this rejoices Christ. This is for He sees Himself understood and accompanied in the things He does for us. And Christ actually see being accomplished the union among us, and between us and the Heavenly Father, a union for which Christ embodied Himself, has sacrificed Himself, and which He ceaselessly prays for. God saves us by asking also for our collaboration, for he honors us as subject, in His image. And what honors God gives us when making our salvation depending on others' salvation and on ourselves? And also, how high responsibility has He placed on our shoulders by that?

Brother, do not feel burdened to come to Christ saying: "Save us, because we are perishing" (Lk. 8: 24; Mt. 8: 25). And you will see what He does against our enemies. Come to Him and say: "Lord. My God, show me how You punish them, for I raise my soul to You".

Regarding the troubles and the temptations which you have to endure, there is not need for you to write me about those, for you know that the Apostle say about that, and you know which the end of the patience is. Let's not get discouraged, brother. This is for great is the Lord Who takes care of us, in order Him to help us. That's why He encouraged us by saying: "It is Me, do not fear" (Mt. 14: 27). And again: "Dare, for I have overcome the world" (Jn. 16: 33). Let's no get lazy and let's fall at His feet and let's ask for His kindness. This is for He will give us more than plentifully the things which we ask for and think at. You must think that there where the toil is, there the rewards will be too; and there where the trial of the temptation is, there too will be the crows of the victory; and there where the love of God is, there will be also the climbing on the cross together with Him; there where the suffering together with Him is, there will be also the glorification together with Him; There where the death together with Him is, there will be also the live together with Him. So, He Who has climbed the cross, he has been relieved form the things of the earth, for he had dies to the world[981]. He must cogitate at the realities from above, there where Christ is on the right hand of the Father.

Regarding Abba, pray for him so that the Lord will cover him, for many are his worries. But we believe that the Lord will cover and help him. I told him that you are late to strengthen

[981] Christ climbed the cross for the liberation of His human nature of its affects which were consequences of Adam's sin, and also for elevating His human nature to the state of resurrection, and also for sharing His human nature to us in this new state, and therefore for us too. So, Christ climbed the cross for us in order Him to show in that His love for us, and his together-suffering with us. He didn't untie the love He showed us through the pains of the cross, from enduing those pains, in order Him to elevate our nature take by Him at the state of incorruptibility, so that Him to give it to us too as such. For these things we too climb the cross together with Him: to strengthen our nature by enduring the pains and to help others through the irradiation of this power out of our nature that has reached the consummation. So, neither I separate our consummation through cross form showing others our love through the cross. That's why we too are glorified together with Him in our strengthened nature, and we are elevated to the clean and incorruptible life which He has raised Himself to. We cannot separate our consummation from our love for people, from commiserating with them. We gain both of these on the cross which we climb on, together with our Lord.

yourself. And he defended you, as he too has assured you. And regarding the prayer, you know that I am nothing. But neither can I untie myself from the love for you. So, you too pray for me, into the Lord.

568. The ask of the Abba of the monastery towards the same Oldman. Because the time id hard, pray, Father, to the Lord to make it pass and for His servants to be covered against all the temptation of our sins.

Answer: If we do that good, the Lord makes the time passing with difficulty. But if we add evil things, we will cause to us even more the untimely perdition. And if you remain into good, God will send his angel and the angel will seal you as the one yielding the sword to defend you (Ezra 12: 53), by the prayer of the Saints. Amen.

569. The ask of the Fathers who lived getting appeased (in withdrawal) in monastery, towards the Great Oldman, for the world. Because the world is in danger, all of us beg you, Father, to pray the kindness of God to turn the arm and to place the sword into holster. Stay among them who fell and among the living with your holy incense, and stop the Destroyer. Elevate the holy alter in the holy courtyard of the heavens and the anger of God will cease[982]*. We ask and pray you have mercy on the perishing world. Remember that all of us are your limbs. Show in the present time too, the mercy and the wonders of God. For Him is due the glory forever. Amen.*

Answer: Brothers, I cry and I weep for the anger that menaces us. This is because we do all the things against that what is needed. This is for it was written: "If your righteousness doesn't exceed that one of the scribes and of the Pharisees, you won't enter the Kingdom of Heavens" (Mt. 5: 20). And our inequities have exceeded those of other nations. There are many

[982] Both these asks are inspired by the Apocalypse. The almost continuous wars started among Persians, made persisting an atmosphere of incertitude. Only the prayer and the sacrifices brought by the saints on the heavenly altar, next to the sacrifice of Christ, could escape the world. These asks were a foretelling for the desolation brought to the Christians in Palestine and in Egypt by Mahomedans.

people begging for God's love to stop His mercy started towards the world and there is nobody loving the people more than God does. Still, God doesn't want to have mercy. This is because He is told about the multitude of the sins from the world. But there are three consummate men in front of God, who have surpassed the human measure and who have received power to tie and to untie, and for forgiving the sins and for keeping them (Mt. 18: 18; Jn. 20: 23). They stay in the middle so that the world not to be destroyed at once, but through their prayers the world to be rebuked mercifully. And they have been told that this anger will last for only for a little more. So, you pray together with them. And the prayers of these three men meet at the entrance of the altar from above of the Father of the Light. And they rejoice together and they gladden themselves together in the heavenly ones. But when the look at earth they cry and they mourn and they weep together for the evils committed and they set in motion the anger of God[983]. Thes ones are: John of Rome, Elijah of Constantinople, and another one in the eparchy of Jerusalem[984]. And I believe that they will gain a greater mercy. Yes, they will. Amen. God wants to strengthen you in order you to hear and to bear these. This is because to them who lack the understanding those things will remain non-understood.

570. Ask: A brother sent to be asked the other Oldman, saying: "in the name of the lord, if you need something, tell me so I can give that to you".

Answer: Brother, may God give you the good reward for your intention. But I have never told anyone, if I needed something: "Give me, but if God sees that I need something, God will have sown that thought to somebody and that one will

[983] It is a paradox in the union between the gladness had by them in heavens and the pain felt by them for the things happening down on earth, resembling to the state of glory and of sacrifice of Christ. Commiserating with them who suffer it is a resting for those who love them (Basil Gonddikakis, Εισοδικον, Athos, 1974). On the opposite, the indifference, the callouses of the heart towards them who suffer, it will bring torment.

[984] At note in the Volos Edition, p. 267, it is told that that one was Barsanuphius who lived in the monastery in the land of Gaza, that belonged to the eparchy of Jerusalem.

bring me that what I needed. And I received that. This is for, if I told that, it would be lust and not need for it[985].

570. bis. Abba (Serid) told to the same Oldman (John) that he has never seen him smiling, or getting disturbed: neither receiving the Holy Impartation without tears, after saying: "Lord, not towards judgment be to me these holies".

It happened that the Oldman told Abba to do something but Abba forgot about that after he left. When Abba came for the second time, the Oldman told him: "If you remember, do what I told you to do". And leaving, Abba forgot again. And after a few days Abba came again and the Oldman gently reminded him about the thing he told Abba to do. And Abba got very sad. And the Oldman told Abba: "Do not be upset, and when you remember than, do it". And because that happened for several times, Abba asked the Great Oldman to show him what did that mean? And the Oldman told him: "That happened with the permission of God, in order you to see the patience and the long-patience of the Oldman, and you to become his follower".

570. c. The Story about Abba Serid.

About Aba Serid I can say many and wonderful things, worthy to be told. But, by leaving aside most of the things, in order our word to be short, I am going to mention only a few of those, but enough for showing the virtue of the man.

He has remains from his youth temperate and very restraint, more than anyone. He tormented his body so that he wounded his body terrifically. But the Holy Oldman prayer to God and Abba was healed, and after that the Holy Oldman commanded Abba Serid to govern his body in the future with right-reckoning, so that to serve his spiritual liturgy, and so him to be able to rule the brothers. He achieved a great obedience, so that he obeyed the same Great Oldman in everything, to his death. This was for, by cutting off his wills as the Oldman himself confessed about him in his "Answers" written before, himself have become obedient. This was for by enduring many

[985] God takes care of fulfilling the needs of all the people, but not of their lusts. The needs are those depending on their nature given them by God. The lusts are elicited by the people themselves over the measure of what they need, or the lusts are stirred up by demons.

things from him and even being him beaten and tried in many ways, and through many things being him held in fire as the gold is kept into oven, he reached to be an honored vessel of good use to the Master. This was for he never answered against in anything. Neither did he reckon himself as an Abba, but as a disciple of the Oldman and as one owing consummate obedience to the Oldman. That was also a proof of the fullest humble cogitation. That's why the Oldman had him like a son.

And he prayed God to give him the gift of the right-reckoning (discernment), which by being given to him, with the help of the grace from above, him to be able to guide their souls to life, to comfort the troubled, to use the word from the Ghost as a healing medicine, and to crow with peace them who were fighting. This was for by firstly filling himself up with peace, he became cause for peace to others too. It was thus fulfilled the word: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called as sons of God" (Mt. 5: 9). And he was long-patient and undisturbed and benevolent to them who came to him. And his word was pleasant and full of decency and "seasoned with salt" (Col. 4: 6). He had, as the Scripture asks us, "wisdom and innocence" (Mt. 10: 10). And he was very loved by the brother, and he gladdened their souls with the spiritual word of the advising, and he was urging them to virtue with the good example of his life and of his virtuous doing, and he was teaching the brothers the things he was doing, and he was mixing the gentleness with the fear of God, by "reproaching, rebuking, and urging", according to the word of the Apostle (2 Tim. 4: 2). And he told, to our benefit, that once an illness cam upon him and he was engulfed by fever, but he didn't ask God to heal him but to bestow him patience and gratitude.

It happened once to a pious and useful brother to be disturbed by the devilish work and he wanted to leave. And because, after advising that brother much, he didn't succeed in convincing that brother to stay, he got up from prayer and prostrated in front of that brother. And the brother saw that and he did the same. And then, Abba stood up and sealed the brother's heart with the sign of the cross and told him: "Brother, what do you want to do now?". And the brother was in a state of a peace and answered: "Whatever you want me to do". And he said that brother: "God and work". And that brother followed the usual program and went to work and he lived in peace, obeying into the fear of God.

On some other time, the same Abba needed a place near to the monastery in order him to build a church and a guesthouse. And he begged the landlord to sell him a part of land, but the landlord didn't want. And because Abba was because of being harassed by the brothers and by the loving-of-Christ laymen who were visiting him, him to insist to buy that place and because of no longing being him able to stand their harassment, and because of him not knowing what to do, he let the other Oldman to know about that. And the Oldman told him: "That place must come to us anyway. But it is not the right time yet. But if your thought troubles you, you will tell to your thought: think that this place is appointed to the imperial army and we cannot buy it, and thus your thought will cease". So, on any occasion he was troubled by that thought, he gave that answer and got peace. After a while, the landlord was convinced to sell that place. But in that place was a small hermitage and a brother was dwelling there. And that brother was asked if he would mind if that place was bought and he accepted with joy. And the place was bought. And after finding that out, a layman who loved Christ and the monastery, told Abba that he didn't rejoice so much because he thought that Abba worked without right-reckoning by wanting rather to satisfy one man than so many brothers who needed a church and who were very troubled or not having a church, and rather than the guests who were coming and having no comfort where to be welcomed. And that layman asked Aba for forgiveness, and asked him what was the purpose which Abba did that on, and he confessed his gossip. And Abba smiles at him and told him: "Son, I didn't want to trouble that brother, and that's why I threw all my worries to God" (1 Pt. 5: 7), and I tried to know the will of God through that brother. I believed that if God wanted us to take that place, God would convince that brother not to get upset. And if that brother got upset, it would be shown the will of God as us not to take that place. And, lo, God convinced him and he accepted joyfully and the things was fulfilled with peace. And that layman wondered about Abba's faith and about Abba's steadfast trust in God and of Abba's love for his neighbor and about Aba's dispassion towards the things of the world – for Abba wasn't defeated by the urge and by the pressure of a need – and that layman prostrated himself in front of Abba and he asked for forgiveness for his mistake. And that layman benefiting much of that, he extolled God for the virtue of the Fathers, and he left.

571. Question: A certain loving-of-Christ brother[986]*, who had much faith in the Holy Fathers, Abba Barsanuphius and Abba John, and for he wanted to be guided by them in his life, he sent to ask Abba John, saying: "Father, I want, by the mercy of God, to withdraw myself into the monastic life. But I am hesitating, if I should reject everything right now and leave, or to set firstly in order my businesses and then to be worriless in my withdrawal. I ask this especially for my old woman and for my children and for the selling of the places from the field. My thought tells me to place my old woman near to her grandsons and to I to give to those grandsons some near places so that they to produce enough food for her and for them. And then I would remain to take care of selling the other places. Tell me how will be the best so I to be able to decide what should I do, for to you God unveiled all the useful things.*

The answer of John: Forgive me, gentleman and brother. I am a simple man who doesn't discern between right and left. But the Scripture said: "No one, after grabbing the plow, should look behind, but let him go straight ahead" (Lk. 9: 62). Then, remember the wife of Lot (Lk. 17: 32). And, again, remember that the lion is hold back by a sole hair and the vulture by the tips of his claw. So, place the old woman near to her grandsons[987] [988] and gain for you the lack of worries. And

[986] In the French translation is mentioned between parentheses: Elian, the future descendent of Abba Serid.

[987] Asking a spiritual father about your thought it supposes you to know how to expose your thoughts to him. But who can do that? Everybody experiences a big entanglement of contradictory thoughts, but only a few people are able to present their thoughts appropriately. The degree of appropriateness in presenting one's thoughts differs widely. But the most nuances logics remain schematic, it remains abstract from the living reality that is indefinite in its movement and variety. We tell that one plus one equal two. But any one united with another one form another kind of pair. More than that, any one is different from another one. There aren't, in reality, two identical ones, neither among people, nor among animals, neither among trees, nor even among stones. The uniformity can be built only by people, but only on a technical plan. The technique can cut identical stoned, it can build up identical houses, or machineries. But those ones aren't a living reality. They are not a fecund reality either on the physical plan, or on the biological plan, or on the spiritual plan. Thus, there is in reality a rationality, but not an abstract one, or a uniform one, but one united with the indefinitely various life. The reality is in the image of the Holy Trinity, Whom the three Persons aren't identical in, Whom the Logos is united with the God in, and both of Them have Their common spring into the Father.

assess her expenses and the expenses of the children and give them the corresponding places. And they will give her what she will need, out of those places, on the ground of their hope of inheriting some of those fields after the passing away of the old woman, in exchange of them taking care of her. Pray the Holy Oldman if you must stay longer and sell the other places and the Oldman will tell you. And you will be worriless into the Lord. This is for He is not far from us, but He is looking at our heart in order Him to see if our heart is in good order; and he will guide us into the good things, if we too want that. So, by taking the commandment from the Oldman, walk trustfully and unhesitatingly towards the things told you by him. And the Lord will guide you according to your faith.

572. Question of the same one towards the Great Oldman: I know that I asked your Holiness about thoughts which exceed my measure. But by hearing the godlike voice that tells that "Not the healthy ones need the doctor, but the sick ones need the doctor" (Lk. 5: 31) and by seeing myself mastered by the multitude of my evil deeds and thoughts, I have thrown myself in the ocean of your mercies for Him Who said: "Alive I am, says the Lord, and I do not want the death of the sinner, but I want him to turn back and to be alive" (Ezra 18: 23)[989]*. And this if for, through you, I too to hear: "Son, forgiven are your many sins" (Lk.*

[988] The man can be an ocean of evil thoughts, but also an ocean of mercy, of love, and of wisdom. And no man is identical to another man, for, it that had been the case, no man would have needed anyone else. Each man is indefinite. Each man has an unquenchable thirst for another, and each man can bestow, endlessly, to another, other and other thoughts and comforting, but also torments. And only the person can provide such comforting and torment to another, while the objects cannot. The entire world is used by each man towards other and other thoughts, which he makes whole or he comforts or he torments with, the souly life of others. In the non-uniformity of the persons, in their reciprocal completion, and in the indefinite variety of the entire world's reality, there stays the possibility of the continuous widening of the horizons of the human spirit, which tends, in the same time, towards an absolutely clean love, which only the Person-like reality of God can have it, for God is various in His Trinity.

[989] God is alive, for God is Person, or better said God is Trinity of Persons, infinitely and eternally loving. Being alive, God wants that the human persons too, whom God created out of His love, for Him to love them and for they to love Him, they to be alive, namely non-unitary, non-uniformized in the repetition of a technique, but accomplishing on one another in their infinite variety into God.

7: 47-48)[990]*. I know and I believe that God has bestowed you to know, through the Holy Ghost, before I ask, what I want and the thoughts which I want to ask you about*[991]*. But because I heard the Prophet who says: "You tell first, your sins, in order you to get corrected" (Isa. 43: 26), I too write my ask praying you not to overlook my wickedness, but you to accept this ask from me, because I am a sinner. This is for you have been given power from God, so that you can get me out of corruption and out of the shadow of death, and for you to guide me towards the true light, for you are kind. What do you command me to do? Should I reject suddenly all the things and I to not longer care of anything, or I should, in the first place, to put everything in order, so that I won't be bothered by worries in my withdrawal, and those worries to cause me all sorts of thoughts which to chock up my spiritual thoughts? And if you command me to firstly set everything in order, please tell me if I should take care of selling my small patches of land. And pray God to help me. This is for I do not ask you cogitating daringly that I could be able to guard your commandments, but I am asking you by trusting your prayers, your advice, and your help. So, pray God for me, so that the Lord to guide me towards the good and useful things and for the lord to give me power to guard your guidance. And God won't overlook your ask. This is because only this gives me courage in my weakness.*

Answer: Son, it is obvious that the time is bad (Eph. 5: 16). And he who can run away from the world, he will be saved as Lot out of Sodom. "This is for the world lies in evil", as it was written (1 Jn. 5: 19), and the people within world they work doubtlessly, according to themselves. This is because, by being they intertwined with the earthly things, they become earthly,

[990] The spiritual son throws himself into the ocean of the mercy of Barsanuphius, for this ocean of mercy I united with but it is not confounded to the ocean of mercy of God, and this ocean becomes a communicating vessel of the forgiveness of his sins. Only by unveiling himself into the indefinite of the love, the man entered in the communication with the infinite of Go's love and mercy, or God entered the communication with the man. And only thus the man becomes communicating vessel of the love and of the mercy of God.

[991] He who loves, he is in a familiar connection with the beloved one, and he can intuit the complexity of his thoughts, even before and more than his less' advances spiritual son is able to express them. It is the Holy Ghost Who penetrated more than the rationalities, or more than the meanings caught by logics. This is for the Ghost penetrates the man's ghost, or the man's spiritual life, out of which there come the ceaseless thoughts come out without ever getting exhausted.

and they who reject those, they will be elevated from the ground. So, they will obviously become heavenly. And we do not understand, we the wicked ones, that even though we do not want to leave these earthly things, we will till leave then unwillingly, at the time of our death. Son, the commandment of God is that the man to immediately break up with everything. This is for, to that one who came to Him, asking and saying: "I will follow You, Lord, but allow me firstly to set in order the things of my house", He answered to that one: "No one, by grabbing the plow and by turning back towards the previous things, is fitted for the Kingdom of Heavens (Lk. 9: 61-62). And to somebody else He told: "Let the dead to bury their dead" (Lk. 9: 60). And again: "He who loves his father or his mother more than Me, he is not worthy of Me" (Mt. 10: 37). And what was the meaning which He told in, that the man must hate even his own soul? (Lk. 14: 26). How can one hate his won soul, except by cutting of his will in everything for the Lord, saying: "Not as I want, but as You want" (Mt. 26: 39)[992]. If you say so with the whole your heart, you will have chosen His will that is us to leave everything and us to surrender ourselves Him. So, what will we do? Will we leave everything? But if, because our helplessness, we haven't reached this level yet, let's bow down our head admitting our helplessness and let's remain to set our businesses in order. And in this case let's not get haughty in our thoughts as one who do the good, as long as we still work the things of the sick. This is for, they who consummately reject the word, they suddenly shake off their own selves[993]. Therefore you, son, as a sick man, and as not fully healthy, organize firstly you to sell so you will be able to assure your old woman.

[992] Hating one's own soul means hating his will, which he thinks that his life depends on. But the life upheld by an own will that is contrary to God, it is a passing and mortal life, and destined to the eternal unhappiness. A life forever broken. This life must be hated, and one must choose the true life upheld by a will that is in communion with God, end therefore with God's life.

[993] They shake off their false self, namely their egotistic self that it locked up within himself, and monotonous, and poor, and broken apart from the communion with God Who is the spring of the infinite and unperishable life; they shake off their sick and helpless self. Only thus they can find their true self, their deeps self that is always new in the spring out of superior, generous, healthy, powerful thoughts, which are lived in the communion with God and open to the endless life which is being overpoured out of God; it is about their loving and communicative self. Still, we often experience how strong and rich is our self when loves and when we feel loved, and how strong and sick is our self when doesn't love and when doesn't feel loved, because of our egotism.

This is because otherwise you will find out a trap in the things. Assure her according to the answer given you by brother John. Regarding the selling of the places from the field, the Lord will take care of that, as the Lord will guide your life too, if you throw your worry upon Him. But remember you to tell Him day and night: "Master, direct my way according to Your will, towards my good and benefit". This is for the Lord know better than any man how to get us out, easily, from the prison of the darkness, namely from the limitation of the things of this vain world[994].

573. The ask of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: Pious Father, I thank God, for you haven't turned your mercy away from me. Consummate your mercy on your servant and pray to Master God for the salvation of my soul, so that I will be delivered from the passions of the evil-forgetfulness, and I to achieve the forgiveness through your holy hands, both in this age and in the age to come; and I to live under your cover until I will leave this body; and, simply, I to become your servant forever, by rejoicing of your grace and of the shelter or your holy living[995].

The answer of Barsanuphius: Son, it is good that you have written me about forgetfulness. This is because, if you didn't forget the things told you by me, you could know out of those that our Merciful Master and fore-knower Lord, He asked me to truly have you as my spiritual son. I have entrusted you with mysteries which I haven't entrusted many other with, as a proof that I have adopted you. This is for whom will the father unveil himself so much if not to his son? But the father does

[994] Thew world of the material things close us up any horizon beyond them. And as the material things are perishable, we too are perishable while remaining attached only to them. Perishing is both the life of the world and our life, and vain, and therefore meaningless.

[995] Being in union with a spiritual father means living under his shelter (μονή), as in a protective and familiar house. They who love on one another are in a state of "reciprocal interiority" (Madinier); each one is within another as in his house, as "at home". They who are united by wedding, they "marry one another" (Saint Dumitru created an untranslatable pun, by using the similar sonority created by the Romanian words *casă (house) / căsători (marrying)*, (E. l. t.'s n.)) they form a house. But any sincere friends of your is like a home to you. But that home uniting all of us and which we feel ourselves gathered forever in, it is God and, in a more familiar manner, it is Christ (Jn. 11: 23). IN the future life we will be consummately and eternally each one in every one, as in a home, and all of us in the common home Who is Christ.

that gradually, on the measure of his son's growing up, in order his son to be able to bear and to guard those mysteries. And all the ask towards God for you, and my prayer, are in order God to set you free from all dishonorable passions, among which the forgetfulness is counted too, and I pray God for Him to send you the Ghost Who will teach you about all the things, and for God not to separate you from us neither in the present age nor in the age to come. This is for God sees how much your remembrance has been rooted within my heart[996]. And, believe me, it won't be ever erased. Believe me that God bestowed you to me, even from now, your soul, towards eternal life[997]. But take heed, carefully, at you too not to forget, and you too to keep, doubtlessly, the memory of the things which I have told you and do not disregard them. This is because many, after gaining and sealing the gold within themselves, the behave carelessly and they lost that what they desired so much. This is because if the field is not cultivated and sown by the owner before the rain comes, all that flowing water will be useless for harvest. Take heed not you be indifferent, looking at how another bears your burden while you are idle. This is for he didn't say: "Much can the working prayer of the righteous" (Jas. 5: 16), but "many", namely it can bear many of the entrusted things. Use the whole your power, because many were with Jesus but many estranged themselves form Him. And the Apostle says: "And if the faithless separate himself, let him separate" (1 Cor. 7: 15).

But may God not allow these things to happen to you, but you to be my true and beloved son, born by me in those pains according to Christ[998], and a sheep of the flock of Christ,

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[996] The remembrance of the beloved one gets uprooted within the heart of his who loves him, and it gets united with the breathing. You cannot leave without loving Christ and without loving His sones whom He loves. And by remembering those, you will have them present within yourself, but without getting yourself confounded to them. Their remembrance is part of your life.

[997] Barsanuphius connected himself so much, through love, with his spiritual son, so that he believes that he will have him united with himself in the eternal life too. This is for he won't feel himself as whole without his spiritual son. One could say that the whole this book is focused on the idea about the union of those who love on one another and who together believe in Christ. This is the Orthodoxy's ghost of communion. This is an internal union in the image of the Holy Trinity and due to the present of the Holy Trinity, or in the interior of the Holy Trinity.

[998] A spiritual son is born by his spiritual father in the pains of the taking care of him, and of all sorts of commiseration, of the toils for advising him and upholding him in his hardships, in

sanctified vessel, and inheritor of the glory; and you, for your living according to Christ, you to achieve the eternal life. Do not shame up my old age. This is for God know how I use the whole my power for your salvation, by praying Him, in order Him to set you for eternity together-inheritor with His saints, of the future goods "which the eye hasn't seen and the hear hasn't heard and at the man's heart they haven't ascended, and which have been prepared to them, by God" (1 Cor. 2: 9). May you too be partakers to these, and you too to be together-inheritor of their, forever and ever. Amen. May this be told also by the Powers from above and by the saints whose till are on earth into body. Amen. Amen. Amen. Be it, be it. And this will be sealed by the Father and by the Son and by the Holy Ghost[999].

574. The ask of the same one towards the other Oldman: After a while, Abba Serid, the abbot of the monastery, he passed away, and he appointed as his inheritors the first among the brothers. But not in order they to lead together, because of being that a cause for disorder, but one at a time, the first one in the first place, and then, after his death, there to come the second brother, and so on, one after another. He appointed Abba Elian as the last one, him to be inheritor if he becomes a monk. But Abba Elian didn't know that. So, after that decision Abba Serid moved to the Lord, the first among the brothers appointed to take the leadership he refused it humbly and modestly. The following ones did the same, following that one's example. Meanwhile, upon this loving-of-Christ brother came, from the devil, a bit sadness for he was thinking at the end of the world and at the troubles which were to engulf him and at the eternal torments. And being him burdened by those thoughts and being him in danger to fall, he sent his question on these to Abba John, and he asked Abba John to pray for him and to give him a word of comforting. And that one sent him the following answer that spoke to him rather about obedience. This was because Abba

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his efforts for fulfilling the given advices, in the worries the son not to be defeated by the temptations coming upon him etc.

[999] All the angels and all the saints pray in a choir in order they to have each soul partaker to their eternal happiness. And God seals their prayer by fulfilling it, if that soul too he strives to advance towards that happiness into the universal communion. This is for God doesn't work in isolation with each individual soul. But all work together with God, for God loves it so.

John was thinking to command him to take the lead of the monastery, as it was seen after that.

The answer of John: Beloved brother, your faith in God asks that if somebody surrender on himself to God, him no longer will have himself under his own control, but he will obey God to the last of his breath. So, let him accept with gratitude anything coming upon him from God and that means "thanking God in everything" (1 Thes. 5: 18). This is because, if the man doesn't accept the things coming upon him, he won't obey God and he will try to impose his own will. So did the Jews trying to impose their will so that they were unable to obey God's law (Rom. 10: 8). So, the faith is one with the humbleness: "This is for, on them whom He called, He corrected them and he glorified them" (Rom. 8: 29). Therefore, you must cast away form you that sadness that works death[1000]. But that sadness according to God, it works the life (2 Cor. 7: 10)[1001]. So, pray for me and do not let yourself discouraged. This is because otherwise you will anger God, by upholding your won will. May our Lord Jesus Christ give you power to do His will, and may you find out mercy in front of Him, for His is due the glory and the mastery forever. Amen.

575. When the brother received this answer, he was immediately liberated from the thought troubling him. But he didn't understand the meaning of the things written to him, and he wondered about the fact that his questions remained unanswered, and he received different answer. After that, the Oldman explained him this thing limpidly, and the Oldman commanded him to take over the administration of the monastery. But the brother wondered about the fact that the

[1000] That sadness that comes out of our mistrust in God, it will give proportions to the come or to the waited for hardships, and it not only causes a palsy of the souly powers, but it causes even a helplessness to endure the life any longer. In that sadness there is death. He who believes in God he will relativize the hardships of the life. He knows that the life's hardships are passing, and that god will intervene at his ask and God will remove those hardships from him.

[1001] On the opposite, that sadness that is born out of the conscience of not having fulfilled the will of God, namely out of the faith that God intervenes when the man prays Him, it will work the salvation from death. Such a sadness is a discontent for the life that is unpleasant to God, namely a life that hasn't fulfilled God's will. That is a sadness that kills the sadness, and that brings the man to the true life, to his life into God.

Oldman thought this about him, because he reckoned himself as unworthy of such a thing. But the brother didn't dare to resist the Oldman and therefore the brother wrote to the Oldman the followings: "Abba, I do not know myself better than the Ghost of God Who lives within you knows me. But I am scared and I treble for the danger of this responsibility. If you know that I can find mercy in this, by having our shelter into Christ[1002], I won't resist it. This is for you have mastery upon me and I am in God's hands in in your hands".

So, the Oldman write him the following answer: Lord and brother, God is witness to me that I truly love my brother. And my prayer if for your soul not to be harmed in any regard. So, by trusting your obedience, and by taking care of your salvation, I have been collaborating with you in that what is good[1003]. The hidden things of the man are shown to God. Do you see, my brother, that there are many things and exceedingly difficult. But believe that everywhere in the monastery, even the ground belongs to God. And Him Who has united the earthly things to the heavenly things, He has sanctified everything with His presence[1004]. Therefore, it depends on you the together-working and the together-suffering of yours, so that you to be partaker to those souls who are saved[1005]. This is for the Apostle said: "Bear your burdens to

[1002] The shelter of the saint is fortified within him by the shelter from Christ. The help provided by the saints it absorbs its power from the help form Christ. The saint is united into Christ in all the good he does to others. That's why he can do that good. Christ won't remain separated from them who believe strongly in Him. Christ is present within them and in their powers which irradiate out of them.

[1003] The active intertwining among them who believe in Christ finds diverse ways or expression: "I trust your obedience" is one of these ways. I do not simply trust you, but I trust you for you trust me. I trust you as a disciple that you will obey me as your spiritual father. I give you my hand but you must let your hand into my hand; do not retracts your hand forcedly.

[1004] The Father gives existence to all realities. The Son gives them their meanings. The Holy Ghost sanctified them, and He gives them their urge towards holiness. And there where the Son if there will be the Fathers and the Holy Ghost too, and there where the Holy Ghost is there will be the Father and the Son too. All realities received only from God their existence, and their meaning, and their movement towards their consummation. This movement towards holiness is the sign of the active presence of God, in continuation, in the created realities; it is the sign that God is not separated from them.

[1005] The partaking of the communion doesn't' consist of a passive interpenetration, but it consists of a together-working of the good, and in a together-suffering of the hardships. I help my fellow human, I suffer together with him, I participate to his life, and we urge on one another to advance in the good things. This is for Christ does so. And that's why Christ gives

one another and so you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6: 2). And he told again: "Let yourself descended to the humble ones" (Rom. 12: 16). And the Lord said: "He who obeys you, he obeys Me, and he who disregards you, he disregards Me" (Lk. 10: 16)[1006]. This is for anything (good, that we ought to do) it belongs to God, so that you cannot refuse to do it. That's why, it there is sone human thing[1007], I am letting you know that we appoint you to take care of it, for God Who has no other care except for the salvation fo the souls. This is for the Scripture says: "He who turns a sinner back from his strayed way, he will save a soul from death and he will cover a multitude of sins" (Jas. 4: 20). Encourage yourself into the Lord and believe to Jesus and he will guard you against the evil one. This was asked for by Him from His Father, for His Apostles. Do not hesitate, therefore, but pour your heart in God and in our Lord Jesus Christ and in the Ghost of the truth[1008]. And by this I

Himself to us always in state of sacrifice, because He commiserates together with us, and He wants us to become together-suffering with Him of others' passions. Christ is the central heart beating for us, and He communicated to our hearts their beatings for other hearts. This is, in the same time, our full healing from the passions of our egotism. We are saved, thus, together, by getting us rid of our sad egotism, for we advance and enter the infinite broadness of God, and into one another.

[1006] "If you are united with Me when you speak, whosoever listens to you he will listen to Me" etc. But we must speak as one who are united through faith with Christ, by feeling that ourselves speak out of His commandment and out of His power which is within us.

[1007] If there is a thing beneficial to the man, a thing helping the man to become even more human, and that help even yourself, namely that thing helps you to be saved, that thing becomes a task of each anyone of you. This is also for the salvation is the sole care of God for us.

[1008] You can pour your heart into God, for you heart I made for living into the endlessness of God's life, thought thing won't mean losing your conscience while united with the conscience of God. But God too can pour Himself within your heart, for your hearts is made so that it can always get broader, in order your heart to comprise evermore the infinity of God's love and life, and you will have God without your heart as Another Subject of your heart, together with yourself. This is for them who pour themselves one within another, they know that they still are two persons, who want to bestow themselves to one another with everything they have, but they still remaining distinct hypostases rejoicing for one another, but being they able to withdraw their life from another, at any time. The heart of the loving-of-God man is poured into the God of the love, and God too pour Himself within that heart. This is for God lives in Himself His love ads an eternal overpouring of each Person within the Other Two Persons. You overpour your heart into God more when you are in state of prayer. God accepts your heart in this state, for only thus your heat can get softened and becomes capable of overpouring itself into God. If you heart gets callous because of your pride, your heart won't be able to get out of itself and to enter another, in the last instance in God too.

believe that you will find mercy from the chair of God[1009]. "May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the impartation with the Holy Ghost ne with you" (2 Cor. 13: 13). Amen.

*575. bis. Hearing these things, the brother let the Oldman know that: "Behold, your servant, be it to me according to your word" (LK. 1: 38). And out of the commandment of the Fathers he was worthy of the monastic schism. And everybody sent a request to the bishop and he was ordained presbyter and then he was appointed hegumen of the monastery. And, in the first place, he was worthy to come a visit Abba John and the Oldman welcomed him as his most honorable Abba. This is for the humbleness of the Oldman was great. And he told him: "Bless me, Abba". And that one was petrified, and he didn't dare to bless the Oldman. And for the Oldman asked for the blessing for the second time, in order not to resist the request, he blessed the Oldman. And being invited he sat. And the Oldman told him: *

"Brother, the Great Oldman foretold me about you that you will be a monk and hegumen of the monastery. And behold, this has been accomplished by the benevolence of God. Take heed at yourself and may your heart be strengthened into the Lord Who empowers you. Amen.

576. Then he asked the Oldman saying: Forgive my daring, Father, for I pray you to explain me about what I want to ask you: why the firstly appointed brothers rejected to take over the leadership of the monastery? And why you allowed them to do so, while knowing their virtue and their obedience and knowing that the order of the succession gave them primacy; and to me, the unworthy one, who have had no work fulfilled in the monastic life, you have commanded me to take over this leadership which they deserved more than me?

[1009] He who hides his thought, he shelters and protects the evil and the lie within himself. He locks up into himself, and he continues to plot against others. He loses the communion with other, the communion that provides joy and that brings the encouragement and the life. By locking yourself up towards others, you won't be able to open yourself to God either, and vice versa. By telling to your confessor your thought, you tell God that you do not detach yourself from Him. This is for you reject your egotism and you enter the communion with God and with your fellow humans.

Answer: The brothers refused due to their deep humbleness. This is for, by having by the will of God the empowerment to take over the leadership, according to the order established through testament, they didn't rush to take it over, but they loved the obedience more. And they have chosen you with the whole their heart, towards the rebuking od them who search for inheritances and for presents, and to them who have the worldly thought of the love for money and who cherish the earthly things more than the Kingdom of Heavens. Rejoicing us due to their humbleness, we have forgiven their withdrawal. But we have commanded you to accept due to the call from God, for God manages everything towards the benefit of each one, according to His prescience. Do not reckon that that has been done because their disobedience. This is for Moses too, when receiving from God the commandment to lead the people, he answered: "I am weak and I stutter" (Exod. 4: 10). And God forgave him because he didn't say that resisting but out of deep humbleness. This was done also by Prophet Jeremiah, saying: "Lord God, behold I don't know how to speak, for I am young" (Jer. 1: 6). And that wasn't counted him as resistance. So did the centurion saying to our Savior: "I am not worthy for you to enter under my roof" (Mt. 8: 8). And the Lord wondered about the centurion's faith that what united with the humbleness. But why Joshua Navi[1010] didn't reject the leadership (The Second Law 31: 7-8) and why the Apostle didn't reject the preaching? Didn't they have humbleness? But both they who accepted and they who rejected had humbleness. This is because one cannot be separated from another. And all those things are being done in order to be fulfilled the judgment of God related to us and in order to be shown, in many ways the virtues of the saints. Therefore, you must believe that all the things from God are fulfilled appropriately and you should not spy any further. May the Lord make you wise and enlighten the eyes of your understanding through the prayers of the saints. Amen.

[1010] In the KJB this book, called *The Wisdom of Joshua the Son of Sirach (The Ecclesiastes)* is not present, but it is given in the ROB. The interested reader can find this book in an English translation on www.academia.edu, together with the other thirteen books not given in the KJB, under the title: *Bible Missing Texts*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

577. Hearing these things, he praised the God and he told to the Oldman:" "Father, because of being I a beginner and because I do not know what to tell to the brothers, what do you command me to tell them?

Answer: Tell them these: "Lord Jesus Christ takes care of us". This is for He told us: "I won't let you orphans, for I will come to you" (Jn. 14: 18). That's why take heed at yourself with the whole your humble cogitation and love for God. And God will bless you and He will be shelter and guide to you". And tell them also these: "Let not somebody hide his thought, because the joy of the ghost is this: somebody to hide his thoughts so that his soul to be lost". And if somebody tell you his thought, you will say within yourself: "Lord, give me to tell him everything You reckon as beneficial to the salvation of his soul; I to say Your word and not mine. This is for it was written: If somebody mistakes, let his word be like God's" (1 Pt. 4: 11)[1011].

578. Question: When I bless the brothers, should I give them my hand, or not? My thought tells me to pet their heads too; would that be good?

Answer: When you bless them, you give them your hand telling them: "Reckon that God will do to you according to your faith and not according to what is pleasant to the man. This is for Himself our Lord said: "he who receives me as prophet in name of a prophet, he will take prophet payment; and he who receives me as righteous in a righteous name, he will receive the payment of a righteous" (Mt. 10: 41). Nd if somebody is prophet and righteous, he who doesn't receive him as prophet and as righteous, he won't take payment. But if he isn't prophet or righteous, but he is received as prophet and a righteous, he who received him will take payment of prophet and righteous[1012]. But you must not kiss their heads because that

[1011] You must speak while being aware of the fact that you are fulfilling a commandment of God. This is for, this makes you feel a responsibility for that what you say. You will speak in the fear of God, as from God. And God won't allow you to tell except that what is pleasant to Him and that what is towards the benefit of them whom you are talking to.

[1012] Your will be honored according to the honor which you receive somebody with, in the name of God. You can receive somebody else with a sincere honoring only in the name of God.

deed has in itself a hypocrisy by searching for being pleasant to the people.

579. Question: How should I behave to my brothers?

Reckon yourself as inferior to everybody. But reckon yourself also as their ruler, by guarding the appointment received by you to be merciful to all of them, as the Apostle said: "Bear the burdens to one another" (Gal. 6: 2) or: "Rebuke the disordered ones, encourage the weak ones" (1 Thes. 5: 14). And if somebody doesn't obey you, you will draw his attention. The same Apostle will teach you out of the few words I have told you.

580. Question: How must behave the keeper of the order (the chief-singer) and the administrator, towards the brothers?

Answer: With long-patience, in order they to bear their weaknesses.

581. Question: If a brother mistakes, how will I rebuke him? Apart, or in front of the brothers?

Answer: If the mistake is a big one, you will rebuke him in the presence of the brothers. But he should be told in advance: "If you do not correct yourself, I will talk about you in the presence of the brothers, for the Lord commanded us so: "Reproach him between you and hi, and if he turns himself, you will have gained your brother. And if not, take together with you one or two more" (Mt. 18: 14-16). And if his mistake is a small one, reproach him and punish him apart".

582. Question: If somebody endures into monastery, which will be the way he will be saved in? And what does he have more, him who lives in a place where there live the Holy Fathers too?

Answer: He who dies into monastery in humbleness and in obedience, he will be saved through Christ. This is for Lord Jesus gives word for him. And him who does his will, while only pretending to be obedient and humble, he will stay under the judgment of God. And him who behaves according to his will for the resting of his body and not for the benefit of his soul, he must be reproached from time to time, because "Him Who wants that all the people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2: 4). And if he persists in that, you will suffer him until he will correct himself, or until he will leave by his own. But if he caused harm to the brothers, tell him that if he persists in that behavior he will no longer be allowed to live there with the brothers. This is for one cannot be endured him to do his pleasure while others get harmed.

And he who persevere in the good and according to God faith, into monastery, he will receive the protection from God and he will get built up. And by dying in that living, he will find his resting.

And the plus had by him who dwells in that place where the Holy Fathers are, it if that he has his faith united with the good doing and he believed in the power of the Fathers. This is for "Much can the working prayer of the righteous" (Jas. 5: 16). That is something that somebody cannot be found regardless where to. This is for our Lord said about Apostles: "When I were with them, I were guarding them. But not I am coming to You. Guard them in Your name" (Jn. 17) 11-13). For Yours is the glory forever. Amen.

583. Ask towards the same Oldman: Deign to tell to the brothers some words about patience and obedience. This is for they will accept your word. And the Oldman told them the followings.

Answer: Brothers, you haven't come to resting but to trouble. This is for our Lord commanded to the Apostle so: "On earth you will have troubles and sadness; you will have, and the world will rejoice" (Jn. 16: 33). If you follow our Lord Jesus, Him to will be together with you. And if you reject Him, He too will eject you. So, he who wants to find blessing from God, let him obey Him Who said: "he who keeps My word, he won't eve die" (Jn. 8: 51). So, he who searches for eternal life, let him keep His

word in cutting his own will, all the way to the shedding of his blood[1013]. And he who searches for accomplishing his will that is unpleasant to God, he won't be partaker to Christ. Take heed at yourself into the fear of God, and our Lord will protect you through the prayers of the saints. Amen.

584. Question: Tell me, Father, how must I welcome the visitors, laymen, Fathers, and brothers?

Answer: Waling into wisdom, you will receive all of them without offending them, according to the word of the Apostle who made himself pleasant to Jews and to Hellenes and to the Church of God (1 Cor. 10: 32). For the love for Christ, you will remember the Lord. This is because of the time leaning towards the body's pleasures and towards satiating the belly, which give born to all the passions. Protect yourself against them who come out of different motifs, either laymen, or brothers, or Fathers. If they come, you won't either flatter them or reject them. If there is somebody coming to waste his time, you will cut off that habit of his. You know the behavior of Abba (Serid) with the visitors. It is more beneficial to you to hear that you a cheap, than you to unwillingly be profligate. Receive them with decency, while you searching for motifs to remain unsatiated. And if somebody forces you, tell him that what the Apostle says: "Do not get drunk with wine, that is fornication" (Eph. 5: 18(. The Fathers say: "Urge every man who wants to be saved, to give repentance to God, and to guard himself from the wine that gives birth to all the passions" (Abba Isaiah, Recueil, 16, 116, p. 137). Guard yourself against those who say: "If you do not drink, I won't drink either, and if you do not eat, I won't eat either", and urge them with humble cogitation by telling them what the Apostle said: "Let him who eat not to despise him who doesn't eat, and let him who doesn't eat not to judge him who eats. Because he east and extolls God" (Rom. 14: 3-6)[1014]. So,

[1013] The order is kept not only by issuing orders, but also by being fulfilled by him who issued those orders too. Asking the brothers for bearing their burdens to one another, himself so asks for that he must be the first to bear the brother's burdens, as an example.

[1014] He who keeps the word of our Lord, he unites himself with the Lord by will. And united with our Lord, he will have the immortal life together with the Lord. That's why our Lord asks us to keep His word, and not out of a simple lust for us to obey Him. By keeping His word, it is promoted the union among all the things, and between us and all the things. This is

both of them are honored by God, for both of them do these things while extolling God[1015]. But out of the love for God, each or us satisfies his need. One will say: "I am weak and I cannot do it, show me your love. For the Apostle said: "The kingdom of heavens isn't food or drink" (Rom. 14: 17), but it is love and clean heart and the followings".

Therefore, discern among visitors, in order you to have the understand and the wisdom to see what they have come to you for: for God, or for foods. And as much as you can, do not lower yourself to the wisdom of the bodily words, with them who come, if it is not necessary to them to listen to the word of God. This is for God gives you wisdom, in order you to talk to them about the "Lives of the Saints", about Gospel, or about Apostles and Prophets. And to not give them occasion for telling some worldly thing, because otherwise the food and all the other things will become bodily too. Snd the things said you by me do not belong to the bodily wisdom. Do not utter the things which are uttered by the worldly things, for they are bodily wisdom. But say: "The Lord said: Give Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give God what belongs to God" (Mt. 22: 21). And if you have come for God, we will be able to speak about the things belonging to God. "The world lives that what it belongs to it" (Jn. 15: 19). But the world doesn't speak together with the harmony of God. Let's take heed to us not to be punished because of together-speaking contrary to the will of God. This is for the Apostle said: "The body's thought is enemy to god

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for nobody has a true life in isolation. There is not where one who is alone. And when one wants to be alone, he will bring disorder among other people and among other things, and he will bring the sufferance within himself. This happens when the man affirms his own will. Then he fights to exit the reality, that is a reality of the many and a reality consummated into The One from Trinity. Any commandment of God is given towards our union with everybody and with all the things.

But our union in will doesn't mean us to be confounded to Him. Saint Maximos the Confessor and the Ecumenical Synod VI defended the human will in Christ in its harmony with His godlike will. Not affirming your won will means wanting what God too wants, it means wanting together with God. We meet everywhere the mystery of the variety in unity. What joy would Christ had if His will was done with us without us too willing that? How could we love Him? How could we obey Him if that was the case? And if we will that what God wills, we will impropriate all the things depending on Him. We will receive within us all the things done by God, for God does those things in the benefit of all of us.

[1015] Not only him who doesn't eat extolls God, but also him who eats and gives thanks to God for the food. Of course, that this brings a certain restraint as well.

because of not obeying the will of God, because neither it can" (Rom. 8: 7)[1016].

585. Question: Tell me, Father, what it consists of a bodily question and how one should answer it?

Answer: Suppose that some people came to us asking about the fighting of a war and we answered them that such a thing is an injustice, and God doesn't help the injustice. And if somebody asks about bodily things, give him a true answer and not a avoidant answer, namely that answer according to god and not a bodily answer.

586. Ask: Master, I ask your mercy you to pray together with the Holy Oldman (Barsanuphius) in order I to be delivered form the haughty cogitation and I to give each one the answer with a humble heart and with the fear of God as you have prayed for the one among saints my Father (Serid[1017]).

Answer: Blesse is God. Be it to you according to your will. And may God Who plentifully bestows all the things to give you through the prayers of the Holy Oldman to live into the Holy Ghost and fearing Him; and may you bestow to everyone, with humble cogitation and with worthiness the necessary answer. Anywhere you reach to be, ask in your thought for the help of the Holy Father: "Abba, what should I say?"[1018]. And to not be

[1016] Neither the food must remain a purely bodily deed. Make it occasion to thank God, and make it occasion for other useful thoughts and dialogues. The food is also a gif from God, and its components are concretized rationalities, not to say also about the body that is upheld in its life by the soul, so that the body is a concretized rationality intertwined with many concretized rationalities and united with the rationality of the soul. The body isn't separated from the soul, the foods aren't prepared without the human rationality or inappropriate to the rationality concretized into body. That's why the foods have the purpose of maintaining the whole body and through body the whole man.

[1017] The "body's thought", on one hand it doesn't want to obey the will of God, but on the other hand neither it can, because of representing a weakness of the man; it is a weakness that seems a power to the man. It is "the thought of a body" that wants itself to be separated form its soul.

[1018] The Old John had so much respect for the Great Oldman Barsanuphius that he recommended to abbot Alian to ask the Great Oldman in thought: "Father, what should I speak?". The Old John saw a connection being established between Elian and Barsanuphius

worries about that what you will speak[1019], according to our Lord's word: "Do not worry about what you will speak, for are not you the ones who speak but the Ghost of your Fathers Who is in heavens is Him Who speaks within you" (Mt. 10: 20).

587. Question: How must he practice the love for guests and the love for poor? And should we receive all the visitors immediately? And when the burden us by asking us to give them clothes, even if we have clothes to spare, should we give them? And how?

Answer: You ought to practice the love for guests and for poor on the measure of your power of endurance. Even if you have more than you need, you will give that with measure in order you not to be take into mastery by the habituation, neither they to ask you equally much when you have nothing more to give. Examine, why the visitor has come? And if the visitor id a thief, give him a small help and let him go. And because there are some ones coming here to burden, do not encourage them. This is for they come out of their avarice, and not because they really need something. And do not give anybody clothes haphazardly, but only to him who much fears God and he is ashamed to ask for clothes. Try to find the truth, and if there is somebody totally poor and needy out of the will of God and not because of himself wasting, you will show him compassion.

588. Question: Why must not be accepted into monastery the vagabond monks?

Answer: Because of them entering the monastery and causing troubled in it. That's why give them a small help and let them go away.

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even through the thinking of Barsanuphius. He was giving this sup[port to Elian because he knew that Barsanuphius was not to communicate with anyone after his death.

[1019] In the footnote to Volos Edition, it is issued the opinion the one within holiness Father was called Elians' predecessor Serid, and through the Holy Oldman was called Barsanuphius (p. 278).

589. Question: If somebody insists to enter, should we let his in, or not?

Answer; Him who you must not receive, you won't receive him even if he insists for being received, as the Fathers said. But if it is necessary, you will give him something more and you will let him go away. This is for this is appropriate.

590. Question: If we do not know somebody at all, and we do not know who he is, should we let him enter or not?

Answer: You receive the unknown one for the first time and see what that man is like. But do not receive one, suddenly, to sleep in the monastery, in order not to raise out of that a trial and to bring you trouble because of not being you able to endure him.

591. A certain hieromonk who occasionally comes to the monastery, he harms the brothers, by speaking and by doing offensive things. And he wants to live close to the monastery as to two miles distance from the way which the brothers walk on. What do you command me? Should we let him enter the monastery and dwell nearby, at the mentioned place, or not?

Answer: Forbid him to enter the monastery by telling him: "Mister Abba, you have offended the brothers and you should not enter here, in order not to offend them even more. Please do not think that we reject you because of hating you: "This is for him who hates his brother, he is man killer" (1 Jn. 3: 15). But we do than because of offense. And you neither can live nearby because of offending the brothers". Tell those things yourself, in order you not to shame him up through somebody else. For he is a cleric.

592. Question: Some other one coming to monastery did something cunning and inappropriate. This was for that man took some things in the name of the blessed Abba (Serid) without him known about that. And Abba found out about that and he commanded him to no longer enter the monastery. That one

heard that, but he still entered through somewhere else. And the gateman saw him and he announced Abba. And this one told him: "Get him out and banish him away from here, for good". If that one comes again, will him let him enter, or not?

Answer: You ought not to receive him, for that won't be beneficial to you. But tell him through somebody else, when he comes: "You cannot enter here". This is for that is not towards the benefit of the soul.

593. Question: Another brother who was dwelling yore into monastery, because of not being useful to the brothers he left. And after a while he wanted to turn back. But Abba didn't receive him, by telling him: "Eve if I wanted, I couldn't offend the brothers' conscience. This is for they will get upset if I received you, and I accept do that". Because he exited, but now he wants to be received back, why do you command me to do?

Answer: Tell him: "You spoke about this yore, to Abba (Serid) and he answered you that this was impossible. So, do not expect now, after a while, to dwell here". And let him go. And if he comes again, you will receive him again, with simplicity, as on a brother. And if he keeps coming, continuously, tell him: "Doesn't your conscience reproach you?".

594. Question: If somebody bring us something, but he expects to receive more from us, what should I do? Should I receive him or not? This is for it happens sometimes that I need that thing.

Answer: If you don't need that, you won't take it. If you need that, you will tell him: "If I take that, I will pay you its price". And strive yourself to give him something equal in return.

595. Question: It happens sometimes us to be visited by pious women and by mothers of some brothers from us. And we deceive them in the outer monastic cell that has windows

towards monastery. Must I talk to them through those windows, or not? And because my wide didn't want to dwell with my grandsons and she bestowed me all her belongings, do you command me that when she comes once, I to give her what she needs? Or, what should I do? How the things should go?

Answer: If there occurs the occasion for women to come to you for God, and not for seeing the place, neither for doing their will, but especially for hearing the word of God, or for bringing something to the monastery, and if you should talk to them, you will talk. But force yourself to guard your eyes, for "him who looks at a woman and lust her, he has already fornicated with her in his heart" (Mt. 4: 28). And everything done for Gud will be covered by God. So, direct your thought to God, in order you not to work for being pleasant to people, either you to search for praise, but out of a clean heart. And if the mother of some brother comes because she needs something, you must not talk to her. This is for her son can assure her that you help her with what she needs. And you are debtor to your wife for the rest of her life, to talk to her from time to time and to give her what she needs, either she wants to life in the city or in her village. And you smut not allow your children to accomplish their wills until you will have set them on the good road of the life, so that you must advise them in the fear of God, feeding them and clothing them up, protecting them against wasting and against being despised by others, as also against searching for unnecessary things, by reproaching them and by telling them: "Takle heed at yourselves for you are not slaves, but free. Aren't you worriless and don't you have more resting than them who have riches?". And after your wife dies, liberate them and give them the necessary thing measuredly, either in their village, or wherever you want to. This is for there is not a law in this regard. If you set then far, they will get estranged and they will no longer reckon themselves among yours.

596. If a thought come to me to change something from the order instated by the blesses Abba (Serid), or to correct something in monastery, do you command me to do that or not?

Answer: If it seems to you that it is necessary to change something, in the fear of God, you won't hesitate. But to not change to much, only as much as the need requires. And even with some restraint, as in a foreign house. This is for the things of this century are like a tent[1020]. When you see your thought trying to change something, you tell your thought: "What do you want that for?". And if that thing is absolutely necessary, you will let that to be done. And if that change is unnecessary, you will tell to your thought: "What is it this good for?". And it that thought it a bodily thought, you will despise it. And if that thought harasses you much, you won't answer it, but you will run to God.

598. Ask: For you have announced us, Master, for several times, about your end, and that's why I am mastered by fear and by sadness, lest for my unworthiness we to be forsaken by God, please give me an assurance that as we are helped during your life so will we be helped also about your departure to God; and for God to help us in everything with His mercies.

Answer: God said once and for all: "I won't let you, neither I will forsake you" (Joshua Navi 1: 5[1021]). And we believe to God that God will do that more than when I have been with you. Either you as for that, or you don't. God will help you more than you ask for, as the Apostle said: "Because we do not know how to pray appropriately" (Rom. 8: 26)[1022]. Our Lord Jesus Christ Who descended Himself from on His parental throne, for our salvation[1023], Himself to save you and to restore you and to

[1020] As a tent erected in a place and lasting for a short time.

[1021] In the KJB this book, called *The Wisdom of Joshua the Son of Sirach (The Ecclesiastes)* is not present, but it is given in the ROB. The interested reader can find this book in an English translation on www.academia.edu, together with the other thirteen books not given in the KJB, under the title: *Bible Missing Texts*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1022] We do not know how to express even that what we feel in our discussion. All the less we know to express ourselves when we have to express much deeper and more subtle thoughts and asks, in front of God. The prayer should be a supreme poetry, for only thus the prayer could come close to the so complex reality which we owe top live it especially on those moments.

[1023] Jesus Who descended to us, by making Himself man, He will always remain descended through His humanity, but after His crucifixion His humanity is a humanity that has crossed through the hardest of our suffering: through death, and after resurrection, it is a humanity that

guard you against the evil one, by us[1024] working together with you through the prayers of the saints[1025]. Amen.

599. Question: Some old men from the monastery asked the same Oldman: We you to tell us, Master, for you have promised us that you have persuaded Master God to allow the blessed Abba (Serid) to leave after you will have left, why God took Abba before time, Him Who always has mercy of the will of them who fear him? And teach us more. Father, why God sometimes hides some things to the Saints, as in case of Prophet Elisha? And why Abba got ill with red swelling when he was about to die?

Answer: As it was said to Abba Anthony: "These are the judgments of God and you cannot know them (Paterikon, Anthony: 2). Regarding the red swellings and about his illness, they came to Abba because he took once glory for people overmeasure; namely, for the people not to deify him. Actually, he was partaker to the Holy Ghost and to consummation. That's why God covered, through this appearance, the man's glory, in order to be even more abundant within him the glory of God. This is for he reached such a measure that he was unable to take care of the earthly thing anymore. And while being him among people, he was no longer able to enjoy a consummate freedom and that's why God took him to Himself[1026]. Regarding us, we have been waiting to happen as we reckoned but it has

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has also the supreme strength gathered within it by defeating our weaknesses and our death as endured by Him.

[1024] He restores us outside the evil we have been into, or outside the sin we have fallen into. One can that here isn't about the Origenistic apocatastasis.

[1025] It is a together-working of us with Him, but a work helped by the prayers of the saints too who irradiated their feeling of love for us not only towards Lord Jesus but also towards us, united with the love of Christ. This power of Christ's love which is present in an which stimulates the prayers of the saints, it sets in motion and it frames into itself our work too. The spiritual reality as life it is complex, it is intertwined of indefinite components, which cannot be understood by the rationality because the rationality separates in order to be able to understand.

[1026] He who has reached the consummation, he has reached the capacity of such a freedom which he cannot practice while being narrowed by his body. That's why his end comes, in order him to exit to the consummate freedom (of affects) and for the glory of God to be shows as overwhelming the man's glory. Even the illness of the man who has reached the holiness, it shows that the glory in the mortal body is nothing in comparison to the glory of God promised to the man through the glory shown to him on earth.

happened as according to the will of God Who is above us in the care for our salvation. This is because it doesn't belong to the man to research the non-comprised realities, but the man must attribute the whole understanding and the whole good deed to Him Who has power, in order those to be done according to Hi will. May Lord Jesus Christ bestow you the trust and may Him get far from you all your doubt and all the evilness of the cunningness. I pray for you to be fortified into the Lord. Amen. Pray for me, so that I to find mercy and I to be saved from the liar knowledge and from insanity, into Christ Jesus our Lord Whom it is due the glory forever. Amen.

599. Bis. (V. 224). The same Abba John dwelled in first monastic cell that belonged to the Great Oldman, a monastic cell that was build to that one outside the monastery; and where the Great Oldman lived in withdrawal for 18 years, until his death foretold by him thus: "I will die seven days after Abba Serid". And for we begged him not to let us orphans, he told us: "If Abba Serid remained five more years, I too would remain five more years, but because God took him against my desire, I too am no longer staying". Then Abba Elian who were recently tonsured into monasticism and who, at Abba's recommendation was appointed hegumen of the monastery, he disturbed Abba Barsanuphius once more, begging him a lot and with many tears, to bestow Abba John to them, because Abba Barsanuphius were no longer sending letters. By knowing Abba John that into ghost, the next day when they came to beg again the Great Oldman, Abba John told Abba Elian: "Why do you disturb the Great Oldman for me? Do not be upset anymore, for I am no longer staying". Then, while we were in tears and we fell at his feet, Abba Elian told him: "bestow me at least two more weeks, so that I could ask you about monastery and about leading it". And Abba John being persuaded by the Holy Ghost Who was dwelling within him, he said: "Behold me, you will have me for those two more weeks". Abba Elian didn't stop during all that time to ask him about everything regarding the leading of the monastery. And after the two weeks passed, he commanded us not to unveil his death until that day was to come. And he called at him all the brothers and all of those who were into monastery, he embraces each of them, and he let them go. Then he surrendered himself to the Holy Ghost, in peace.

600. A brother asked the Great Oldman, Abba Barsanuphius, saying: "I do not know how have I come across the books of Origen and Didymus and the "Gnostic Heads" of Evagrius and of his disciples. And they say that the people's souls didn't appear together with the people's bodies, but the souls existed before as clean minds, namely non-embodied. Likewise, the angels too were clean minds, as the devils too. And the people, because of their mistake, they have been condemned to live into this body. And the angels by preserving themselves they reached to be angels. And they tell several other things like these. They also say that the future punishment will come to an end, and the people and the angels and the devils will come back to the state of clean mings, as they were before. They call this "restoration" (apocatastasis).

Because my soul has fallen into doubt and I am tormented, I pray you, Master, teach me if those are true or not; teach me the truth, so that I to keep this truth and I not to get lost. Actually, none of these is told in the godlike Scripture. But even Origen himself told in his explanation given to the "Epistle towards Titus", that isn't a teaching of the Apostles neither of the Church that the soul is older than the body, and he called heretic him who says that. And even Evagrius confesses in his "Gnostic Heads" that nobody heralded that neither the Ghost instilled those to somebody. Lo what Evagrius says in the head no. 64 of the second hundred of "Gnostic Heads": "And about the first ones nobody has let us know. About the second ones explained him from Horeb (Moses)"[1027]. And in the head no. 69 of the same

[1027] This work of Evagrius was published in Syriac language and with a German translation, by W. Frankenberg, *Evagrius Politicus*, Berling, 1912. Frankenberg tells us in the *Preface*: "In his thinking that was totally depending on Origen and on Origen's school, Evagrius gives to dogmatic reflections of Origen a note of practical ascesis and of monastic mystique, that was very important during the following time, even for the Church who erased the name but not also the influence of Evagrius" (pg. 1). The text of Evagrius is accompanied by the commentary done by Toman of Marga (Batai) from the Century IX, published by Frankenberg in Syriac and in German translation.

Actually, Evagrius told in the head no. 64 that in the revelation of the Holy Ghost "isn't said anything about the mode of the coming to existence of the rational beings", so that it is affirmed their existence from eternity. And in the head no. 62 Evagrius said: "When the minds of the saints will receive their sight (theoria), then the thickness of their body will be removed" (according to Regnault, the first text is given according to Patr. Orient, 28, p. 87,

hundred, he told that "The holy Ghost didn't tell us the prime difference of the spiritual beings, neither the first essence of the bodies". The fact that there is no apocatastasis but there is endless punishment, it was told us by Lord Jesus Himself in the Gospel, by saying: "They will go to the eternal damnation" (Mt. 27: 46), and: "Their worm won't die, neither their fire will be quenched" (Mt. 9: 48). So, Mater, where they get this out from, while neither the Apostles taught us that, nor the Holy Ghost explained us that? How could they confess that against the Gospels? Have mercy on me, Father, and explain me what these teachings are?

Answer: Brother, woe to us because of what misfortune our nation has fallen into! Where have we reached at and what do we occupy ourselves with? What are we striving to an what are we reckoning? We have left the straight ways and we want to walk on the meandrous ways. It is being fulfilled with us the word of the Scripture: "Woe to them who leave the straight ways and they walk on meandrous ways" (Sir[1028]. 2: 16). Verily, brother, I have stopped crying for me in order I to cry for you because of where have you fallen into. I have left my crying for my sins and I am crying for you, my child. The heavens tremble because of seeing the people's spying. The earth is shaken because of seeing the people wanting to examine the non-comprisable things. These are dogmas of the Hellenes[1029]. These

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the second according to P.O. 28, p. 89). At Frankenberg are a little different both the head no. 64 and the head no. 69.

[1028] In the KJB this book, called *The Wisdom of Joshua the Son of Sirach (The Ecclesiastes)* is not present, but it is given in the ROB. The interested reader can find this book in an English translation on www.academia.edu, together with the other thirteen books not given in the KJB, under the title: *Bible Missing Texts*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1029] The Origenistic and Evagrius' theories are actually the pantheism of the Hellene philosophy dressed up in Christian words: God Who the pure minds (the spirits) fall off from, He is not an infinite God, once the spirits can become bored while contemplating God; such a God isn't a Person-like God, once they do not think that God is capable of being a partner for an endless love. Such a God would be an essence that wouldn't be but the object of a finite contemplation, so that God Himself would be finite as such. Such a God would be an eternal but finite nature, emanating finite minds from eternity, and having from eternity finite mind in His finite possibilities, finite minds which get bored by their finite contemplation, due to the contemplated subject and to the subjects contemplating Him. (…) And a Spirit capable only of a finite contemplation, He won't actually be a Subject. The finite essence and the spirit contemplating it are both submitted to a limited law of the repetition. It that was the case, neither that what we call God wouldn't be a Person-like and free Subject, nor the mind that contemplated would be so. They would be of the same essence and locked up within some

ones are vain frivolous speaking of the people, who imagine that there is something in those. These ones are words of the lazy people. These ones are contrivances or the straying, for he says: "Saying that they are wisemen they have gone insane" (Rom. 1: 22). And if you want to learn, you will take heed at what our Lord and Luminous Light and Emperor Jesus Christ says[1030]; out of their fruits you will know them" (Mt. 7: 16). So, what sort of fruits do they bring forth? The haughtiness, the despise, the corruption, the indifference, the offense, the estrangement from the law, of better said from the Give of the law Who is God[1031]; they are dwelling place of the devils and of their master, the devil. Such teachings do not bring towards the light on him who believes them, but their lead him to darkness. These teachings do not urge us to the fear of God[1032], but these teaching rather lead to advance rather to the devil. These teaching do not get somebody out of marsh, but they rather sunk everybody into the marsh. These ones are the tares sown by the devil in the field of the Master. These teachings are thorns sprouted out in the land cursed by Master God (after the falling of the people). All these teachings are darkness, all of them are straying, all of them are estrangement from God. Run away from them, brother, in order they word not to get strengthened within your heart. These teachings dry the tears out, they bling the heart out, and, simply, the lose the people who take heed at them[1033]. Do not remain in those teachings, dop not cogitate at them, for

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laws of the repetition. Consequently, those minds fall into bodies which they will not longer contemplate the essence within, because of being they desiring something contrary, but then the desire for contemplations comes to them again, and this repetition would continue eternally. This is the eternal monotonous repetition of the nature.

[1030] Jesus if the Person-like Light, by excellence; Hs is the eternal spring of the light. Consequently, He cannot be exhausted by any contemplation. Likewise, as Emperor by excellence, He is superior to any law, He is not partaker on the same plan as we are, and He is not a non-free nature.

[1031] The haughty, the corrupted, the helpless, the lazy, by reckoning that they can reach and know everything that one can know, but without deeds of love, they actually remain into a fatal and eternal spiritual poverty, because of not striving to consummate themselves an all plans, including on the plan of their body.

[1032] These if because of remaining those within finite, in this world as ultimate essence, because of not being in connection with God Who is above any law, namely in connection with God Who is the Giver of the laws.

[1033] The haughtiness, the reckoning that you can now by comfortable contemplation everything which one can know, for you are of the same essence with the whole, it will dry your tears up so that you can no longer cry for an admitted mistake of yours, in front of the Master Who is infinite in power and Who has an infinite love.

they are full of bitterness and their final fruit will be your death. And regarding the knowledge of the future things, do not go astray. That what you sow here, you will reap there. After the end of the life from here nobody will advance anymore[1034], and God doesn't get exhausted from creating the man and his soul in the same time[1035]. Regarding the heavenly groups, the godlike Scripture shouts up the mouth of every man, by telling us that: "He said and it was done, he commanded and it was built, he established them for eternity and forever and ever" (Ps. 148: 5-6[1036]). And the things made permanent by God won't change[1037]. This is for, according to the Scripture, there is no

[1034] The Origenistic theory affirms that here within body you cannot really achieve any progress in knowing God. You will achieve that progress only when no longer being into body. But the Christian teaching affirms that that what you haven't sown here you won't reap there beyond. If you haven't been fighting here for good and for knowing God, here within body, you won't have the consummation there beyond. The life from here isn't vain, it isn't a simple punishment. Through body we can make efforts for good, and for knowing our relationship with God. Through body we know the humbleness, the value of enduring the hardships, and the cross.

But in the Origenistic theory the mind cannot progress endlessly neither after getting separated from the body, because of reaching again a state of boredom, of that what the mind knows, so that the mind desires again to leave from there by descending again into a new falling.

[1035] It is not too tiring to God to create in the same time the whole man: with body and with soul. The Origenistic cannot see a necessary unity between soul and body. The Origenism estranged too much the soul from the body. The man wasn't reckoned as a whole. The man's soul didn't have the destination of transfiguring the body, and it left the body into the marsh of the passions; or it reckoned that the body can escape from that marsh but not through a positive transfiguration, but through the violent liberation from that what is characteristic to the body (castration of Origen). And a real progress of the soul into cleanness, through the transfiguration of the body, it wasn't reckoned as possible by Origen. The Origenistic contemplation is a simple theory, as the subtlety of the devils is, skillful in nuancedly expressing the perverse complexity that doesn't reach to the new horizons of the spiritualized life, because of not transfiguring anything. The dualistic separation between soul and body have been manifested in the western painting, or in the Origenistic iconoclasm. Only the Orthodox icon bears witness about the body's "transfiguration". The Orthodox ascesis is something else than the destructive-of-body ascesis of the Origenism, because of being an ascesis that transfigures the body.

[1036] In KJB we have: Ps. 148: 5-6: "Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created. // He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass."; in ROB we have: Ps. 148: 5-6: "Let them praise the name of the Lord, for He said and they were made, and He commanded and they were built. // You placed them for eternity and for ever and ever; He set them law and they won't transgress it." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1037] The Origenism affirms that all the spirits were equal and as they fell, they descended on diverse levels: some of them on an angelic level, other on the human level, and others on the devilish level. But the Scripture tells us that the angels were created as angels and they remained so. God created steadfast beings who do not change.

change at God (Mat. 3: 6)[1038]. Where did you find out that the striving of this angel leads him to a progress[1039]? Brother, if you want to be saved, you won't throw yourself into these teachings. Otherwise, I testify you in front of God that you will fall into the precipice of the devil[1040] and in the ultimate death. Part your self with these teachings and step on the trace of the Fathers. Earn your humbleness and your obedience and your crying and your ascesis and your poverty and the being unnoticed by others, and all the other good things written in the "Words" and in the "Lived of the Fathers". Bring fort fruits worthy of repentance, and do not look at me because I speak without doing. But pray for me so that I to come somewhen to the knowledge of the truth, to the glory of the Holy trinity, now and forever. Amen.

601. The same brother asked the same question to the other Oldman: Abba John.

Answer: "This wisdom is not from above but it is bodily and devilish" (Jas. 3: 16). This teaching is from the devil. This teaching brings them who adopt it to the eternal torments. He who tarries in it he will become a heretic. He who believes it, he will have deviated from the truth. He who attaches himself to it he will be stranger to God. The workers of Chrit didn't teach these things. They who receive the word of the truth they won't receive these things. Get yourself quickly far from those, brother. Do not burn your heart into the fire of the devil. Do not sow in your field brambles instead of wheat, in order you not to take death instead of life. And, briefly: Do not receive the devil instead of Christ. Do not tarry into these things ands you will

[1038] If the realities created by God got transformed, that means that God Himself would get transformed. But everything changes only in nature. The nature is submitted to a law of the evolution. That's why the forms occurred in nature they get changed. But at God there is no change. This is for God cannot advance to a higher consummation, neither can God decrease in His consummation. By and large, the person can progress infinitely, without getting transformed.

[1039] It is here being denied a change, or a progress, that would change somehow the degree of the angels' essence, and it is not denied a possible of the angels to progress in knowing God. Such a progress can take place within man too, and it is reflected in the man's body's "transfiguration", and not in the body's melting down or transformation.

[1040] The precipice of the devil is the bottomless void, and not the depth of the endless spiritual richness by advancing into God, namely the endless live.

be saved as Lot from Sodom, through the prayers of the saints. Amen.

602. The question of the same one: So, must we not read the writings of Evagrius?

The answer of John: We do not accept such teachings. Read from among his writings, if you wish, those which h are beneficial to the soul, according to the parables from the Gospel, about the net in which it is written that "the good things he placed them in vessels, and the bad things he threw outside" (Mt. 13: 38). Do the same.

603. The same brother after asking those questions was restless in himself by thinking and by saying: "And because some of the Fathers accept these teachings, should we still reckon them as good monks who take heed at themselves?". And after several days it happened that the same brother went to ask to the Great Oldman to pray for him. And then the Great Oldman talked to him about that thought from within his heart, so that the brother wondered and was amazed. And the answer of the Great Oldman was this:

Answer: Because you are telling me and you have thought: "Why some of the Fathers accept the gnostic heads of Evagrius? Well, they accept those by reckoning themselves as gnostic (knowers) through themselves and they haven't prayed to God in order they to find out if those heads are true or not. And God left them into their knowledge regarding those gnostic heads. But regardless, neither us nor you are allowed to research these things. But the time given to us is for us to examine our passions and for crying and for weeping.

604. The question of the same one and of other brothers towards the same Great Oldman: Father, they who cogitate these things about the preexistence of the souls, they do not avoid to talk about the Saint Gregory the Theologian that he too speaks about preexistence in his writings, as for instance in those "About Lord's Birth" and in that one "About the Easter Day". They

paraphrase some of the sayings of that one according to their heart and the overlook the things said limpidly there about the creation of the first man, about his soul and body, according to the tradition of the Church. This is because lo what he says: "The Craftsman wanting to show the Word, by raising the man as a creature composed of two parts; of the unseen and of the seen natures. And by taking the body out of previously created matter, He sown within the body the breath from Himself, that what the Scripture knows as understanding soul and as image of God" (Gen. 1: 27; G.P.[1041] 37: 632 B). And in the following one can find out many other things said limpidly and doubtlessly by him about the man, as composed out of the previously created matter and out of the soul given by God. In these he prays much the man's nature and he calls the salvation of the body and of the soul as a gift worthy of God. He doesn't say as these ones say, that the soul has been dressed up into body through damnation, because of being punished for the previously committed sins. But also, in other diverse writings of his, he shows this purpose of his of keeping the dogma clean.

They boast with Saint Gregory too, the brother of Saint Basil, that he too spoke about preexistence, because they misinterpret some of his sayings. But that one fight limpidly and powerfully, in the chapter 300 of the writing "About the Creation of the Man" against this theory of the preexistence, and he topple it over, as the blessed David and those from around Saint John and Athanasius and all the other enlighteners and teachers of the Church did too (G.P. 44: 229 B).

Regarding the apocatastasis, it is true that the same Saint Gregory of Nyssa speaks limpidly about it, but not as these ones say that by ceasing the torments the man will be restored in that what the man was in the beginning, namely as pure mind. But he only says simply that the torments will cease and they will have an end[1042].

[1041] G.P. = Greek Patrology. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1042] L. Regnault places between parentheses, in the French translation: G.P. 64: 110 E. But Saint Gregory of Nyssa speaks about apocatastasis only as about an eventuality. And only in his early writings (See the Romanian translation of some of his writings, in the collection *Părinți și Scriitori Bisericești (Churchly Fathers and Writers)*, no. 29. The writings from this volume were translated by Fr. D. Stăniloae, except *The Life of Moses*, revised after a translation done by Fr. I. Buga). The term of apocatastasis at Saint Gregory of Nyssa can mean also the restoration of the human nature in the state liberated from the consequences of the ancestral sin, namely: the mortality, the hunger, the thirst, the sickness etc. as the human being was before Adam's falling. This state if brought back through the resurrection of the

Tell me, therefore, Father, why such a man doesn't speak rightly, as it is due to a holy man, who have been found worthy of speaking out of the power of the Holy Ghost? Actually, also about ourselves, some of the Fathers and teachers speak by not calling this one as sensitive but thought (spiritual). And regarding other things from the Scripture one can see that sometimes these Fathers and teachers are in disaccord with one another. We pray you, Master, explain this to us, for us to be enlightened by you and so us to extoll God and us not to doubt our holy Fathers.

The answer of Barsanuphius: "Blessed is God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ Who has blessed us with the whole our spiritual blessing into the heavenly ones into Christ. Amen." (Eph. 1: 3).

Brothers, it is the right time for us to say as the Apostle did: "I have made myself insane, but you have forced me to" (2 Cor. 12: 11). I actually force myself for you, in order I to researching and to speak things over my measure, which are not quite beneficial to the soul, or they even wound the soul. We have left Paul the Apostle who says: "Let be removed from you all the anger and the wrath and the blasphemy, together with all the evilness" (Eph. 4: 31). And I am adding here: "Together with the covetousness of the belly, with the debauchery, with the love for silver, and all the other passions, for which we mut weep and cry ceaselessly, so that through the multitude of our tears the defilement of our passions to be washed away. And us to become clean out of defiled, righteous out of sinners, alive out of dead; and us to think that even for a sole word we are going to be held accountable (Mt. 12: 36). This is for it was said: "You will reward each one according to his deeds (Ps. 61: 11[1043]). And again: "We will have to present ourselves in front of the judgment chair of Christ, bringing each of us the things he did through body, either good of bad" (2 Cor. 2: 10). We must

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body, though the resurrection will elevate the man on a higher state. Anyway, the apocatastasis at Saint Gregory isn't the bringing back of the man, as embodied soul, to the state of a pure mind, without body, as Origen said, according to whom the man bearing a body was constituted only through a falling of the previously pure mind.

[1043] In KJB we have: Ps. 62: 11-12: "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God. // Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work."; in ROB we have" Ps. 61: 11: "Once spoke God, and I heard these two things: that the power belong to God and Yours, Lord, it is the mercy; that You will rewards to each one according to his deeds." (E. l. t.'s n.)

strive ourselves to do these things with our Fathers too strived themselves with, our Fathers who lived around Abba Poemen, and those who lived after that. Let's strive not to be noticed, not to praise ourselves, and in reckoning ourselves as dust and ashes. Opposite to this it is the endeavor to reckon ourselves as knowers (gnostics[1044]), and to progress in our pride, and to cherish ourselves and to praise ourselves for anything, and to get far from the humble cogitation. Forgive me! Haven't you reach into these because of being you unworking? If it is so, descend to the marketplace where the Master will come and take you to work His vineyard. If there was within your heart the thorn regarding that fearsome answer, you wouldn't think at these things[1045]. "The prophet forgot about eating his bread" (Ps. 101: 5[1046]), and we live carelessly and with indifference and out of those we fall into other things. God doesn't ask from us these things, but He asks us for: holiness, cleanness, silence, and humbleness[1047].

So, for I haven't wanted to let you into such thoughts, and on the other hand because it was a torment to me to pray God to enlighten me in this regard[1048], because of being I caught between these two needs, I have better chosen this torment in order I to get you rid of this torment, by recalling him who said: "Bear your burdens to one another" (Gal. 6: 2). So, listen to what God gave me to know three days before you writing me your question. All the Fathers, the saints and the

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[1044] The entire mentioned writing of Evagrius sees the salvation only as "knowledge" (gnosis), for the spirit fallen into body through punishment has not the mission of transfiguring the body or the matter. Even when he speaks about the cleaning of passions and about love, he reckons those only as means for reaching the direct knowledge of God without a mediation of the body.

[1045] If one will get appeased by the fact that the evils done by him on earth aren't eternal, he will no longer fight those evil and his indifference.

[1046] In KJB we have: Ps. 102: 4: "My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread."; in ROB we have: Ps. 101: 5: Wounded is my heart and it has withered as the grass; for I have forgotten to eat my bread." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1047] These ones are the paths towards the endless consummation into God, ways which cannot be practiced without a body. The things opposite to those will lock us up into the finite monotony, by conceiving the salvation as a simple exterior forgiveness. Everything becomes, in the Origenistic-Evagrius' conception an eternal superficiality.

[1048] Barsanuphius reckons that he mustn't occupy himself with such theoretical questions, but he must take care of his cleanness of passions. Even asking God for being enlightened regarding such questions was a torment for him, because by asking God for that he feels that he somehow upsets God, by showing himself more preoccupied with the theory than with the practice of cleaning himself up.

righteous and the true servants of God, who were well-pleasant to God, let them pray for me! But you must not reckon that, being they saints, they were truly able to comprise the deeps of God. This is for the Apostle says: "We know and prophesize partially" (1 Cor. 13: 9), and again: "One is given by the Ghost something, another is given something else, and to somebody else those things, but all of them are worked by One and the Same Ghost" (1 Cor. 12: 4-11). And the Apostle by knowing that the realities of God are non-comprisable, he shouted out saying: "Oh, the deep of the richness and of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How unsearched are His judgments and how unfollowed are His ways! This is because who knew the mind of the Lord? Or who has become His servant?" (Rom. 11: 33-34). So, by striving themselves to become teachers, or because of being forced by people to become teachers, they advanced very much become even superior to their teachers and they composed by being inspired from above, new teachings. But they preserved, in the same time, the teaching of their teachers, namely also teachings which were right. And after that, by advancing and by reaching to be spiritual teachers, they didn't' ask God regarding their teachers to show them if their teachings were told through the Holy Ghost. But by reckoning themselves as wise and knowers, they didn't discern among the things they argued. And so, their teachings have been mixed with the teaching of their teachers. And sometimes they spoke out of the teaching found by them at their teachers, while some other times they spoke out of the understanding of their mind. And so, those words were written in their name. This is because, by taking one from others and by progressing and by improving the taken things, they spoke from the Holy Ghost that what they were taught by Him. But they also spoke out of the teachings received by them from their teachers, and they didn't differentiate their words from those ones' words, or they didn't think that they must take assurance from God through asking and prayer, whether their sayings were true or not. And thus, the teachings got mixed. And because they were the ones uttering those teachings, those teachings signed by them[1049].

[1049] Barsanuphius tries on this way to explain some of the remnants of the theories issued by Origen in the writings of Saint Gregory of Nyssa and of Saint Gregory of Nazianzus. They respected Origen as they did to any teacher whom they learnt many things form. Due to the things learnt by them from that one, they were able to advance in their cogitation and so they were able to correct most of his teachings, by being they guided to do that especially by the

When you hear someone of them that he heard from the Holy Ghost that what he speaks, that is an assurance which we must believe it. But when he utters those words[1050], you don't hear him saying that. This is because of that not being out of the inspiration from the Holy Ghost, but out of the teaching of his teachers from before. And out of respect for their knowledge and wisdom, he didn't ask God about those whether those were true or not.

Lo, you have heard the entire my stupidity. Get appeased now, occupy yourselves with God and stop the vain-speaking. Take heed at your passions, which you will be held accountable for, on the day of the judgment; while about these things you won't be held accountable of that what you didn't know of you didn't hear about. So, cry and weep. Walk on the traces of your Fathers, Poemen and those following him, and "run and grab" (1 Cor. 9: 34), into Christ Jesus our Lord Whom it is due the glory, forever. Amen.

605. Question: Father, you truly are guide to the blind and light into Christ to the darkened ones. And through you the truth has been shown to us. Actually, we find out in the "Books of the Ole Men" that there was a certain Great Oldman who, in his simplicity, he was saying that the bread which we are imparted with, it is not the actual body of Christ but it is the antitype (the image) of Him. And until he didn't' pray, firstly, to God, he didn't know the truth (Paterikon, Daniel 7). And the Old one, great too, he reckoned that Christ is Melchisedec, and when he prayer to God the truth was unveiled to him (Daniel 9).

And forgive me, Father, for the lord, because of daring I to ask you things above my measure. This is for our God

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Holy Ghost. But small remnants form the wrong multitude of the Origenistic teachings persisted to them too. This was because they didn't' always pray God to tell them whether those small remnants were true or not. In essence, Barsanuphius operated a distinction between the own teachings of Saint Gregory of Nazianzus and of Saint Gregory of Nyssa, and words taken from Origen, which he reckons as impropriated by the two saints from Origen. He declared that the right things said by those that they had those things from the Holy Ghost. But he didn't say that about the wrong thins remaining from Origen. Anyway, Barsanuphius taught, clearly, the eternity of the torment (Answer 607).

Saint Maximos was to show in his "Ambigua" that even in those remnants seeming Origenistic teachings at Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, they are rather influences of language, inconsistently maintained from Origen, rather than content remnants.

[1050] Preexistence, apocatastasis.

enlightened to us, through your holiness, the non-strayed way of the truth, so I pray you to fully enlighten us int this regard too, for our heart and mind to be cleaned up of the spying on those things. Why did God allow such men to go astray, even if they didn't' pray to Him? Why didn't the truth be show to them in grace, in order the later readers not to be harmed? This is because, even if they weren't impeded by the right-faith or by virtue, but those weak and lazy as I am by accepting the things written by those Fathers as worthy of faith, we are easily harmed by those, because of not knowing that what you have said, neither the fact that not even the saints were able to understand all the mysteries; and the fact that those Fathers didn't pray to god for Him to let them know whether the things written by them were true or not. Explain to me, therefore, you merciful Father, this too, by being you lenient to my weakness.

Answer: Son, not God was the One Who allowed these men to go astray. This is because him who allows somebody to go astray is him who have been asked about the straight way but he doesn't tell the true. But they didn't ask God about that in order they to receive from God the truth[1051]. And if you ask why God didn't impede those by grace (from mistaking) so that that to be beneficial to those who would read those later on, you can ask this about any sinner: "Why God, despite He knowing that the sinner will sin and so the sinner will be example to many, why God didn't impede the sinner by grace so that many not to be harmed too? But by that the people's life would be submitted to a forcing. And why would impede God from saving thus all the people? Aren't there into Scripture too words which are offensive to them who are untaught and non-knower of their spiritual meaning? This forces us to ask: Why God didn't' show

[1051] We are noticing here how much Barsanuphius made the finding out of the truth in uncertain things, as depending on the prayer to God. Only in the responsibility lived in front of God through prayer, God understood as infinite Person, the man will me shunned from the haughtiness that makes him affirming or taking wrong affirmations as true. Right in the prayer is manifested the faith into the Christian and Person-like, and loving-of-people God. Right the prayer shuns you from falling into mistakes having pantheistic implications, as the Origenistic ones were too, as result of rather philosophical-theoretical preoccupations than of the care for salvation. The pantheistic philosophies are wrong systems because their authors do not build them up out of responsibility in front of God as live in prayer. And, actually, the supreme reality, namely the true reality, it cannot be an impersonal essence manipulated by the, man's thinking, but it is the Person-like-God Who is his fullness like Person He must be Trinitarian and loving.

clearly the spiritual meaning of the Scripture, in order the people not to be harmed, but God let to the saints from diverse times the effort to interpret the asked questions? That's why there are teachers and interpreters (exegetes), as the Apostle says (1 Cor. 13: 28)[1052]. So, do not go yourself astray regarding the men whom you have asked me about. This is for if they asked those form God, they would receive those. This is for he says: "Everyone who asks for, he will receive, and he who searches for, he will find" (Mt. 7: 8)[1053]. God unveiled the way of life through prophets and apostles, but in such a manner that they spoke individually. That's why there wasn't only one to speak about it. And that what one left (untold), another said it by the will of God.

So did God with the saints after that too. And that what some of the saints say without sufficient clarity, they from later told it differently, for all the time to be God extolled through His saints. This is for The Same One is the God of the first one and of the ones following after those. To Him is due the glory forever. Amen.

606. Question of the same one towards the same one: Forgive me, Father, you loving-of-people one, for the lord, for I am very tormented. This is because of reading I some things in a book of Dogmatics and I see my heart disturbed. And I avoid talking about that. But I neither am able to keep mu silence because of my thoughts. Why do you command me to do, Holy Father?

[1052] The prayer as means for finding out the truth it doesn't exclude the effort of the research. And this toiling brings also an increase in the spiritual understand of the man, and that understanding, at its turn, it will urge the man to prayer and it will open the man to the loving light coming from God through it. So, the discovery of the true and deeper meanings of the Scripture it depends on the man's growth through his progress in time, but it also depends also on the succession of generations of researchers who unveiled new questions to their descendants and they offered their descendants the possibility to find new and truer meanings of the Scripture through the answers given to those questions. That's why, some mistakes which we found at the old teachers, they were due also to the fact that they hurried themselves to give answers to questions when the time wasn't ripe for true answers.

[1053] Here, the asking from God and the mind's searching are intertwined. The searching is too, one could say, a prayer, when it is done with the responsibility in front of God; the prayer too is a searching. This is for through both of them the man deepens himself into the spring of all realities Who is God. But it is necessary for the man to understand his search as his prayer and his prayer as effort for getting closer, through understanding, to the godlike and mysterious spring of all the realities.

Answer: Because the devil wants to throw you in a useless occupation, tell me what you wish. And may God not give him room.

607. The question of the same one towards the same one: "Tel me about the resurrection of the bodies of the saints if they rise in the present boy which we are not in, and which has vessels and nerves, or they will rise in an aerial and round body[1054]. This is for some people say that the Lord's body too, it will be like that at the future resurrection, because they do not think at the fact that He resurrected from dead into our body, which He took it out of the Holy Birth-Giver of God and Forever Virgin May, for our salvation. They say and hold that what the Apostle says too: "Whi will transform the body of our humbleness to be alike the body of His glory" (Phil. 3: 21). And they again found themselves on the fact that the Apostle said: "body and blood won't inherit the Kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 15: 50). So, they say, this body won't enter the eternity, because of subsisting on food and in the future age there won't eat of drink. And they also say that the Apostle says about our Lord Jesus Christ that "After all the things will have been submitted to Him, for Him to be God in all the things" (1 Cor. 15: 28). And they also invoke that what is said in Ecclesiastes that "it was in the ages which were before us" (Eccl. 1: 10), in order they to ague, on this ground, the "preexistence". Likewise, by bringing that what is said into the Gospel that "I won't exit from there until you will pay even the last penny" (Mt. 5: 26), and so they hold that we will have an end of the torments. So, clarify me this, Master, in order the enemy

[1054] This too was a teaching influenced by Origen. An aerial and round body will not longer be a body composed or organs which are prolonged within the feelings having their roots into the soul. Such a body would be somehow close in itself. This is the same conception about the absence of an intimate connection between soul and body, as between two parts of a unity. The Origenism refers to the state form after resurrection, which the body won't preserve in its organs full of spiritual feelings, which start to be like that, to some of the saints, even while on earth. He doesn't affirm the absence of the body without organ only in the provisory state form before resurrection, when the soul actually doesn't have a body, but the feeling manifested through the body's organs have remained rooted into the soul. To Origenism there isn't actually a properly-said resurrection of the bodies as a full reactivation in a spiritualized manner of the feelings into the resurrected body. The bodies' thinning up to become an aerial form it is conceived as a physical transformation and not as an overwhelming of the body through spiritualized feelings shown in "transfiguration".

not to stray me away, and I to fall, because of my nescience, in all the enemy's traps. This is for a wobble to all direction because of my stupidity, for I haven't guarded your holy words for refraining myself from these things form the beginning, because of they containing a great danger for the soul. And pray for me, you the good Father, in order I to watch from now on, and I to take care of my crying for my sins. And forgive me because I have dared to ask you about these things. But as one who knows everything, you allowed me to tell you about those things[1055].

Answer: Brother, I wrote you before that the devil sown within you an occupation not required by the body. This is because the body had by you it requires you to cry and to weep for your sins. Still, in order I not to let you into these thoughts, if you want to find out about resurrection and if you believe the prophets, God showed us what the resurrection would be like, through Ezekiel the Prophet. There were gathered bone to bone, joint to joint, veins and skin and nerves and so the dead ones resurrected (Ezek. 37: 7-8). And the Apostle knowing that we will resurrect into bodies, he taught us saying: "This is because this corruptible ought to be dresses up into incorruptibility and this mortal to be dressed up into immortality" (1 Cor. 15: 53). Do not go astray! The bodies will resurrect with bones and with nerves and with pores. And so will the bodies be forever. But the bodies will be more luminous and more glorious, according to the word of the Lord Who says: "Then" (Mt. 13: 43)[1056]. He

[1055] Here are being exposed the main Origenistic errors. The Origenistic logics deduced out of the fact that the bodies weren't united in the beginning with the souls, that the soul neither will remain united with the bodies forever. The souls existed from ever and they will continue existing for eternity, according to this theory. So, the souls participate to the divine eternity. And the soul won't endure an eternal punishment because the punishment is related to the body. The soul as pure mind doesn't feel pain (what a gross understanding the pain!). The mission of the soul doesn't consist of growing up into consummation, a consummation that to be shown into the body's transfiguration as well, but it consists of motionlessly contemplating God. But a motionless contemplation is almost something lacking the life, it is some sort of confounding into the fundamental essence. But them how does the motion start out of that state of unity with the contemplated essence? Here one must resort to a law interior to the essence, which gathers into itself, and which unfold itself endlessly. This means an evolutionist and involutional pantheism. Origen is a precursor to Hegel.

[1056] It is about the spiritual light of the soul full with the kindness of God reflected into bodies. It is the inundation of the body with the godlike living and loving spirituality, whose light if not of physical character, but it is of moral character. That is not a matter physically reduced to air as the least condemned form of the matter (as in Origenism), but it is a matter that will have become transparent by the presence of the soul cleanness up of passions and unite with

will add glory to the bodies. For instance, when the ordinary soldier[1057] when he reached near to the emperor and the emperor makes him general and he fills him up with glory, won't him be the same? Has his body been transformed? Or, as a deacon who is ordained suddenly into bishop, he will immediately be full of glory, so it is here too. Or, as there are now too people who reach to bear God within their bodies. This is for, how did Moses see the Lord? Or before Moses, Abraham and Jacob, and then Stephan in the deeds of the Apostles? Were they without bodies? So, they will be at resurrection in the same bodies, but their bodies will be incorruptible, immortal, and more glorious. That's why the Apostle says about the human body: "it is sown into dishonor, it rises into glory; it is sown souly body, it rises spiritual body" (1 Cor. 15: 43). He teel these things for many of the saints are not shown to the people, but they rather are lacking any honor in the people's eyes. Sand when they will receive there the glory, like an ordination, it will be shown to everybody as spiritual[1058]. That's why we say: "It is sown souly body, it rises spiritual body", a glorified body, and everyone will wonder about that. And when the Apostle says: "Who will transform the body of our humbleness in order our body to be alike to the body of His glory", it means that He makes the bodied luminous as His body is, as Apostle John said: "When He will show Himself, we will be like Him" (1 Jn. 3: 2). This is for the Son of God is the light, and these ones being together with Him "sons of God", the righteous ones will shine like the son in the Kingdom fo Heavens, and the too will be sons of the light (Eph. 5: 8; Exod. 5: 5)[1059]. And this is the meaning of: "He transforms them".

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the loving God. The matter's rationality makes possible this transparence of its, for the consummate soul of whose rationality elevated into God it depends the kindness too.

[1057] απλός στρατιώτης, the ordinary soldier, as the villager is. Or it may be about the mercenaries recruited into the Byzantine army from pagans.

[1058] The light of the face, the glory of the body, it is the spiritual state reflected in the face, penetrated into the body, and shown as through a display.

[1059] God made His Son man, in order to make us too as His sons. But if God is luminous light, by becoming us sons of God, by that we become also sons of light. And that will be shown not only in our soul, but in our body too. This is for the Son of God, by embodying Himself, He has made Himself our brother not only according to the soul, but according to the body as well. The godlike light is spiritual, it is understanding, and it is supreme kindness. This is shown into us too, when we become the brothers of Christ. And it will be reflected into body too.

Regarding the saying: “When all the things will have been told to Him, and the Son Himself will submit Himself to Him Who submitted everything to the Son”, you should find out, in the first place, whom these things were written to? To the Corinthians. And at theme there were still flourishing the Hellenism. And some of the Hellenes had this custom: When the son of a king of theirs reached the maturity, he rose and killed hi father. And let, by receiving the preaching of the Apostle, they to cogitate the same thing about the Son of God, he banished away from them this sharing of custom, by telling them: “When all the things will have been submitted to Him, then He will obey Him Who submitted to Him all the things”[1060]. So, when His enemies will be brought, tied, to His feet - by this one understands the devil and his powers and those who follow the devil’s wills. That’s why the Apostle said: “we do not see yet all the things submitted to Him” (Hebr. 2: 8). Until when? Until the angels of God will bring the disobedient to God and the Father Who said: “Sit on My right hand until I will lay your enemies as footstool to Your feet”. These enemies will be brought by the Father, through angels, to the judgment of the Son[1061]. This is for our Lord said: “The Father doesn’t judge anybody, but He has given all the judgment to the Son” (Jn. 5: 22)

And in order you to understand how (the Son) surrenders the Kingdom of God and the Father, listen to these: The embodied Son of God came to call and to sanctify through His Blood “a holy nation, a chosen people who craves for good deeds, an imperial priesthood” (1 Pt. 2: 9; Tit. 2: 14). So, your must understand: “After His enemies will be submitted to Him

[1060] Barsanuphius shows by this too, the love reigning among the Persons of the Holy Trinity. Sadly, among people and even within the same family the love doesn’t always reign thus way. By this explanation Barsanuphius removes a conclusion implied into Origenism: that not only the human persons, but the godlike Persons too, they will merge, as God Himself will merge with all the realities, being thus put an end to the individual shapes appeared out of essence. Actually, it is about a presence of the will of the Father in all the realities, through the work of the Son Who removed form people that will that was opposing to the Father. This is for the Son was the first to submit Himself like man, fully, to the Father, on the cross. But after that, He will work in order to submit everyone, as on Himself, to the Father, but this work proceeds from the Father. That’s why it is not only the Son submitting the enemies to the Father, but also the Father submits them to the Son. Each of them fills up the believers with the love for another. But the devil and his followers will be submitted in another manner: by the fact that they will no longer have any power over those who have been gained by Christ on behalf of the Father and by the Father on behalf of the Son.

[1061] The Greek text about this question is very unclean; it probably has been much altered.

and He will judge them, at His turn He will submit, as example of obedience, the Kingdom gained by the holy people, to God and the Father, saying: "Behold, I and the children given to Me by You" (Isa. 8: 18; Hebr. 2: 12). Notice the equality: The Father gave all the judgment to the Son and the Son gave to the Father all the people called by Him. And thus it is fulfilled the word: "When all the things will have been submitted to Him, then the Sn too will submit Himself to Him Who has submitted all the things to the Son".

Regarding the ages which the Ecclesiastes speaks about, you must know that the time of a man it is his century. That's why he didn't say: "that he was in the ages from before this world", but "in the ages from before us" (of this world). And if you want to see that the untaught and the unbased corrupt the Scriptures and the misinterpret the Scriptures according to the devil's teachings, the Apostle says: "The food is for the belly and the belly is for the food; but God will abolish both these and those" (1 Cor. 6: 13). He speaks about the covetousness of the belly, about fearlessness, and about gorging. In this meaning he abolished the food and the belly for the saints. The Apostle s who said these things, by knowing that he said these things regarding the passions and that the passions have been abolished by the Lord at Himself, and at those alike Him, the Apostle said also: "Neither if we eat will we be condemned, nor if we do not eat will us justify ourselves" (1 Cor. 8: 8). This is the meaning of that word. And regarding the future age, God said that the people will be alike to the angels (Lk. 20: 36), neither eating nor drinking, nor lusting for (Num. 24: 30). This is for nothing is impossible to God (Gen. 18: 14). God proved this through Moses who spent thus forty days and forty nights. He Who did this (with Moses), He can make the man live like this for all the years of his century[1062]. And if somebody is delirious and says that he (Moses) ate later on, as also the Savior did after His resurrection, he did that in order to give us a partial proof about the resurrection to the future life[1063]. That's why

[1062] If God can help the man to survive without food during the man's earthly existence, all the more can God do that in the man's future life. It is not about a power exercised by God over man from outside, but it is about God being within man. On the measure of the man's consummation, the man will no longer need food.

[1063] In the Volos Edition, cited page, at footnote, it is said that the present objection refers to Christ Who ate after resurrection as well. But Christ did that in order to show that his body was seen and it wasn't an apparent image. But He didn't eat because he needed that. Just by

ate, at their turn, also they who were resurrected form dead, as proof for they were resurrected. He showed us also through Apostles that there will be a resurrection[1064]. Even though those resurrected people died later on, we must not reject the faith into resurrection. In addition to that he says: "Not only with bread will live the am, but with any word coming out of God's mouth" (Mt. 4: 4). What more will one be able to say regarding this, if he doesn't want to misinterpret this word or the words from the Scriptures. Regarding the word: "Body and blood won't inherit the Kingdom of God, neither the corruption will inherit the incorruptibility" (1 Cor. 15: 50), through body and blood he calls here the uncleanness and the evilness and the own wills.

But, do you want to know if, while still being into body, can people become spiritual? Listen to our Lord Who says to Nicodemus: "You must be reborn from above", and then He adds: "out of water and Ghost" (Jn. 3: 3-5). And those born out of Ghost, they are spiritual. And He says again: "They haven't been born out of blood, nor out of the will of the man, neither out of the will of the body, but out of God" (Jn. 1: 13). So, if they become spiritual while still being here, by being they born out of God, won't be God able to make them spiritual there too? And the word: "He won't get out from there until he will pay back even the last penny", He told that about the eternal torments. This is for, where could they pay back from? If a poor debtor is thrown into prison and the judge tell him that he won't get out until he will have paid the entire sum of money he owes, can one tall that that debtor will ever get out? No, one cannot. Do not go astray like a crazy man. Nobody advances there[1065]. And

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eating He gave us a proof about resurrection, namely about the continuation of the life after resurrection, even though that was an inadequate proof.

[1064] The resurrections committed by Apostles were too a proof about the possibility that a resurrection of the bodied will take place.

[1065] One could pay if in hell one could work for correcting himself. But that would mean one to do something for others. But working for them who are in heavens it is not necessary. And if they from heel could work for one another, the hell wouldn't be hell. And they would even have God within themselves because one cannot do anything good without God. Or, if those form hell were in a persevering repentance, they would be like some monks in a monastery. Actually, the hell is the petrifaction in a helplessness to ever become kind, after one has accustomed himself for the whole his live here on earth, to that state of evilness. Actually, the people form hell are no longer able to work one for another even in the provisory state form after resurrection. And this is not because they will no longer have a body, for the roots of the senses and of the active organs remain within the rationalities of the soul so that they can somehow express themselves to others, but because they got petrified in an egotism, in a spiritual helplessness for willing communication, or better said an impossibility of loving

one will have anything from here, either good, or evil, or pleasant. So, leave these stupid frivolities and do not walk on the grace of the devils and of their teaching. This is because the devils grab you suddenly and they suddenly throw you down. Humble yourself in front of God, by crying for your sins and by weeping for your passions. Remember the Scripture that says: "And now Israel" (The Second Law 10: 12); and again: "And now I have started" (Ps. 76: 10[1066]). Take heed at yourself. May God forgive you. See what your heart leans towards at, by spying.

608. Question: Another brother asked the same Great Oldman, saying: Tell me, Father, if I see somebody doing something and I talk about that to somebody else, and I tell to myself that I do not condemn the doer, but we only talk about him, will that still be slander in my thought?

Answer: If there is in talking a passionate impulse, then it will be slander. But if the talking is free of passion, it won't be slander. You must tall only in order not to increase the evil.

609. Question: What does it mean: "With the stubborn one, you will turn yourself" (Ps. 17: 29[1067])?

Answer: The Lord said: "If someone smite you over your right cheek, you will turn your other cheek too" (Mt. 5: 39). So, you must turn yourself to the stubborn one.

610. Question: What does it mean: "Be wise like the snakes and innocent like the pigeons"? (Mt. 10: 16).

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communication, because an unwilling communication of their enmity will still be possible to them.

[1066] In KJB we have" Ps. 77: 10: "And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High."; in ROB we have" Ps. 76: 10: "And I said: Now I have started to understand; this is the change of the right hand of the All-High." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1067] In KJB we have: Ps. 18: 29: "With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward."; in ROB we have" Ps. 17: 29: "And with the chose one, you will be chosen; and with the stubborn one, You will be stubborn." (E. l. t.'s n.)

Answer: He who has a wisdom like the snake had regarding the evil, and he has also a innocence as the pigeon has regarding the good, ne won't allow him wisdom to become cunning, neither will he allow his innocence (simplicity) to become mindless.

611. Question: Who are they who do the evil willingly, and who are they who do the evil unwillingly?

Answer: They who do the evil willingly are those who surrender their will to evilness and they get sweeten by doing the evil; and they make friends with the evilness. These ones have peace with satan and they do not war him in their thoughts. And they who do the evil unwillingly, are them who have within their limbs a power that fights, according to the Apostle, against their mind (Rom. 7: 23), as a misty power or as a wave, but in their thoughts they do not dialogue with it, neither they get sweetened by it, nor they obey it, but they resist it, they work against it, they counterattack it, and they get angry with themselves. These ones are much better to God that those who surrender their free choice willingly to the evilness, and they get sweetened by it.

612. Question: What does it mean that what our Lord told to the Samaritan woman: "You have had five men ands he whom you have now is not your husband" (Jn. 4: 18)?

Answer: The word is limpid. According to an old law, all the women separated from their husbands by death, and who had no children, they could marry other five more men. But if one married after the fifth marriage, with a sixth man, that one would not be her husband, but she lives with him in fornication, the union with him being illegitimate. That is what happened to that woman too.

And if one wants to find out a more mysterious interpretation, the five legitimate men are the five natural senses: the sight, the smell, the hear, the taste, and the touch, which we know through all the things which we come in contact with. And the sixth sense is the faithlessness, which that woman united herself with, because of her nescience and

contrary to nature. So, Christ told her: "Verily you said, for you had five husbands". This is for you had as husbands your five senses, which mastered you and which drove you according to their will. Namely, you have satiated your lusts which enter through the five natural senses. You have lost those because of the helplessness of your old body. And that one which you have it now, namely the faithlessness, it is not your husband, namely it doesn't master you in a natural manner, but it does that from outside.

613. And urge of the holy and Great Oldman Barsanuphius towards a beginner who got sick and who was unable to bear the upset caused him by his illness.

Answer: Brother, when the workers asked the master of the vineyard for a payment, they didn't brag themselves except with one thing: "We have endured the heat of the day and its trouble" (Mt. 20: 12). Let's endure, therefore, son, with thankfulness, the trouble, in order us to be plentifully imparted with the mercy of God, and let's not get discouraged and so to fall into the slavery to idleness. Remember, son, that "he who will endure to the end, he will be saved" (Mt. 10: 22). Son, there is also an illness towards temptation, and the temptation is towards rebuking, for "the non-tempted man is inexperienced" (Reseh. Agrapha, no. 90, pp. 130-132). And him who is tempted into dangers, he is proven like the gold in fire. And getting prove bring the man to hope, and "the hope won't get shamed" (Rom. 5: 4-5). So, do not allow the enemy to weaken your decision according to God and so the enemy to shake your faith into the Holy Trinity. Tell me, what has happened to you that you have become so drowsy? Remember what the Apostle says: "You haven't resisted yet all the way to the blood fighting the sin and you have forgotten that urge that speaks to you like to some sons: Son, do not get discouraged by the rebuking from the Lord, neither get weaken because of being reproached by Him. This is for him who is loved by God he will be rebuked and the Lord beats every man who received Him. If you endure the rebuking, God will be near to you like to some sons of His. This is for, who is that son whom his father doesn't rebuke? And if you are without the rebuking which all other have been made partakers to, you are stepsons and not sons" (Hebr. 12: 4-8).

If you endure the trouble with thankfulness, you will reach to be a son. And if you show yourself as drowsy, you will become a stepson[1068]. I prayer you, sons, I the Oldman pray you the young one; I who are old in monastic clothes, even if I haven't benefited anything of, I pray you who have recently been tonsured[1069]. And may this not be vain, Lord Jesus Christ! Take vigil, wake up from the drunkenness of the too heavy sleeping[1070]. Get up like Peter and the other Apostles, shouting out towards Christ Who is the Savior of everybody, with a loud voice: "Master, have mercy on us, because we are perishing" (Lk. 8: 24; Mt. 8: 25). And the Master is going to surely come to you and he will rebuke the winds and the sea and He will remove the storm form your ship, namely the blizzard from within your heart, and He will snatch you away from the bloody lion, and He will snatch away your pigeon for the belly of the dragon. He will defend you crop against the hails and He will defend you oil against the worms and your trees against the frost, in order they to bring their fruits forth at their time. And the seed of your earth will yield ripe fruits according to the word of the Lord, one a hundred, one sixty, and one thirty. Think, brother, that you endure for the name of God. The Apostle mentioned these troubles after he said that "nothing will separate us from the love of Christ: neither the trouble, not the tribulation, neither the hunger, nor the persecution, neither the lack of clothing, nor than danger, neither the sword" (Rom. 8: 35). And then, will we allow a small sickness to shake out mind off God? Let that not be! But strengthen yourself, son, and think at the help coming from God. This is because this is the first temptation. If you overcome this one, it will not longer

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[1068] God doesn't want to have except powerful sons, who show themselves above the hardships they endure, and stronger than the temptations. The strong God doesn't want to have as His sons some crying rugs. But they are strong in their patience and in their kindness.

The desire for seeing him saved, the pity for the perdition wanting for his young spiritual son, make the Oldman to use even the prayer in order to give to that sone strength and courage. So prays the strong one to the weak one. The Son of God descends to us so, crying for us. There is a continuous descent by the sacrifice He is bringing for us, through His state of sacrifice which He bestows Himself in, to us. This is the strength of him who is truly strong: the strength of the humbleness.

[1069] It is characteristic to the spirit to be awake, not to be sleepy and having the conscience almost lost, in the likeness to the animal.

[1070] Like the earthly emperor crows up the valiant soldier who endures and fight for him, likewise the heavenly Emperor crows up him who does that for Him. This is for, in this patience it is shown his faithfulness, and his love for the Heavenly Emperor.

master you. But if you allow yourself to be defeated now, it will drive you to slavery. So, you must stay strong and endure it. This is for, if you stay strong, you will see which the mercy of God will be. And let you love be assured that I do not stop night and day from praying to God, for you to be saved, and God to guard us all against the cunning one. And my endeavor is for you to inherit, together with the saints, as some children of theirs, "the things with the eye hasn't seen and the ear hasn't heard and at the man's heart they haven't ascended, which God has prepared to them who love Him" (1 Cor. 2: 9). Accept these and you will be happy into Christ.

614. A brother mistook and by hearing from Abba, for several times, "Say only forgive me", that brother got callous and he didn't say that. And only after Abba prayed him and kneeled in front of that brother for three times, he barely convinced the brother to say "Forgive me". And the brother left for his monastic cell, Abba told him: Brother, examine your heart by sitting alone within your monastic cell and you will find out where the callousness of your heart has come to you from". By doing so, the brother fell to the ground and he confesses himself to Abba and prayed Abba to talk about that to the Great Oldman Barsanuphius, and to ask him to pray for that brother. And the Saint answered him the following things[1071]*:*

The answer of Barsanuphius: Brother, take heed at yourself. You have asked to sow your field. Nobody forced you. Take heed at not to allow to be sown among your wheat the tares form the devil, namely the food of the fire. You have asked me about your thoughts. The Fathers says: If somebody asks, he must guard all the way to his death (that what he was told to). And if he doesn't guard that, that will be to him a road to perdition. You have allowed evil and awful thought to nest within your heart. Why do you reckon as briner of death thought which are not so, while him who make your light as darkness and who makes the darkness as light to you, and who shows you the bitter things as sweet and the sweet things as bitter, he is the devil, who makes you see the life as death and

[1071] Abba is here the Father served by that brother. But each one had their own monastic cell.

the death as life[1072]? This is for the enemy goes around you raging like a lion and trying to swallow you alive (1 Pt. 5: 8)[1073], and you do not understand that if the hand of God and the prayers of the saints didn't protect you[1074], you would fall into the devil's perdition and straying. You reject the words of God uttered you by your Abba, and you reject the salvation of your soul, so that you will never come to the knowledge of the life. How many efforts makes you Abba for you as for his own soul, by asking the saints to pray equally much for you, so that you to escape the traps of the devil and of the death, and you to be saved into the nest of the Lord. Your Abba toils for you so. And you do not feel yourself debtor to guard his words as the apple of your eye and to reckon him above your soul? You have become naughty by getting bored of the good living with him, which you should never had enough of, and which you should pray God to make you worthy of it, and in order not to be to you towards judgment the ceaseless living with him and you to fulfill that what he command you, zealously and with great fear and tremble, so that to come upon you the blessing from God and you to be delivered form the deceit of the enemy. In order not to be fulfilled with you too, the word: "Jacbo ate and he got satiated and the beloved one got satiated" (The Second Law 32: 14); neither the word: "Woe to you, Chorazin, woe to you Betsaida, because if had been done in Tyr and Sidon the wonders which have been done within you, they will have repented long time ago with sack and ashes" (Mt. 11: 31). And you too not to hear: "Yu have hated the rebuking and you have turn you back to My words" (Ps. 49: 18[1075]). Why do you often

[1072] The evil consists of a toppling over of the values, one covered by lie. The good is represented as evil, and the evil is dressed up in the shiny coat of the good, the decomposing of life passions are represented as producing of life, and the virtue which enrich the man are seen as impoverishing him, and the strength of self-control is seen as weakness, while letting oneself prey to his anger is seen as strength. He lives a lie. That's why, the live provided by him is a lie too, it is a string of spasms of the pleasure and the continuity of a torment.

[1073] Though dead, or into a bi void, he will let you forever alive, in order you to get tormented. This is satan's pleasure. Besides, satan cannot destroy the life totally, for the life is given by God. That's why satan uses the appearance of the life as the ultimate rest of good, in order to deceive you.

[1074] In the prayer of the saints irradiates the power of their love, strengthened by the power of the love from God. The true power is the love. God cannot be but love.

[1075] In KJB we have: Ps. 50: 17: "Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee."; in ROB we have: Ps. 49: 18: "You hated My teaching and you have rejected MY word behind you." (E. l. t.'s n.)

temp yourself by addressing evil words to others but you cannot endure that what they say to you? Your heart gets bling because of your envy and slander and you case disturbance to yourself[1076]. You have often cut off and broken your sight, and your brass mind doesn't get ashamed, and you head doesn't bow down, as also brother John told you[1077]. But who received these and got saved? Cail received them from the beginning and he has received the curse from God (Gen. 6-7); and after him the giants, and they got drown in the water of the flood (Gen. 6-7); Ham and Essau, and they were deprived of the holy blessings (Gen. 9 and 27). Pharaoh got callous and the water of the Red Sea covered him and his men (Exod. 14: 16-18). Those who were around Datan rebelled against Moses and the earth swallowed them and their houses (Num. 16). And if the priest who opposes is swallowed by the earth, according to the Scripture, how dared you to oppose him who told you to say: "Forgive me" and you didn't say it? And by that you have estranged yourself from that humbleness from God and from "The Words of the Fathers" who tell us that "in everything we need humbleness, so that we must say, in everything, the word: forgive me" (Abbe Isaïe, Recueil, 3: 1; p. 48). And you heard it for so many times and you didn't say it. And even when you told it, at the end, you didn't say it truly. This is because of you saying it forcedly and not with repentance and with the pricking of the heart. How much longer will you remain with your head upraised and with your heart not circumcised? Look and see that nobody around is callous. Why do you give to the devil your hand and power towards the perdition of your soul?

Be awake, my brother, take vigil, wake up form your deep sleep and from the drunkenness without wine that masters you[1078]. He who obeys, he obeys in everything. One like that no longer worries about his salvation, for another will answer for his salvation: him whom he obeyed and entrusted himself

[1076] The envy makes you bling regarding the good parts or deeds of others, and you even hate those. The envy cause darkness and disturbance within yourself.

[1077] The Old John the Prophet.

[1078] The drunkenness of the unconsciousness. The faith ever accentuated the conscience, the feature distinguishing the man form animals and it fills the man up with ever more luminous light, making the man to think at himself and at his relationship with God and with his fellow humans. Only the conscience of this relation is a true conscience, or a created conscience.

to[1079]. If you want you to be saved and you to live in heavens and on earth, you will guard these. And I will answer for you, brother. And if you disregard these, you will see[1080]. But do not cut off your hope, because hopelessness is the joy of the devil[1081]. I have convinced Abba to receive you to his bosom so as you are. This is because Abba got far from you because of your disobedience and non-submission. I have convinced him to receive you into the fear of God, as a true and not illegitimate son. But you too must trust him, with the fear of God, in everything. And witnesses are to me the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost for I am bearing the whole care for you in front of God. And God will ask for your blood from me, if you do not disregard my words[1082]. So, set a new beginning today, helped by the hand of God[1083]. Behold, you have been renewed; guard yourself and no longer remain yourself attached to useless chatter. May the Lord give you understanding in order you to obey and to fulfill. And in everything you want to ask me, from time to time, I won't feel myself burdened to answer you that what God will give my mouth to say, and I will let your heart

[1079] You untie yourself from your responsibility for yourself and for others, for the whole your earthly life, meaning that you untie yourself also from the act of the supreme answer at the final judgment, for you are preparing yourself by answering on earth for you and for others. But the heroism of this renunciation to the responsibility for yourself is compensated by the heroism of surrendering your fate only him whom you reckon as more capable than you are of answering for yourself. You have chosen your path also in this your total trust to another, by an act of total responsibility. Ou have tied the responsibility for yourself to the responsibility of another for yourself. You are continuously placing the responsibility for yourself in his responsibility.

[1080] Letting your salvation in the care of another, by cutting off your will, it doesn't mean resting yourself into indifference. But it means always fulfilling, responsibly, the things told you by your spiritual father, things which are not easy to do. It means taking care of those things. Youa re not saved as a wood log, but you are required for that the biggest efforts which you are capable of. You are required: the responsibility for fulfilling the things commanded to you as yourself would have chosen to fulfil those.

[1081] The desperation is the joy of the devil, that stops you from any effort to do something for your salvation. It paralyzes you. In this state was Judah. You no longer believe neither in yourself nor in the help from God.

[1082] To him who parts with his spiritual father, by not fulfilling that one's commandments, the spiritual father too will no longer be responsible for this spiritual son of his. This is for the spiritual father won't present himself at the gate of the eternal life as united with this spiritual son. The separated spiritual son has taken upon himself the whole responsibility. The blood of this brother is his life, because in that blood have been imprinted and through that blood have take power all the man's good of bad thoughts and feelings.

[1083] The true life of the man begins on the moment of his starting to his corrected life, start which God Himself in present it.

know what you have to utter for the salvation of your soul, into Christ Jesus. Amen.

615. The same brother, by not obeying his Aba, he asked the Great Oldman if it is useful to guard some things said under oath in a moment of furry of his; or if he must repent and not to fulfill his oaths.

The Oldman told his these:

Answer: The Lord told Moses: "Go down quickly. Because the people whom you have brought out from the land of Egypt have committed lawlessness. They deviated from the way commanded them by Me. And behold, they forget a calf and they worship that idol" (Exod. 32: 7-8).

How have you gone so quickly astray, you miserable, from obedience? Has the devil who wants you estrange you, started furiously upon you? Isn't this that what I told you that you are mindless and uncircumcised to your heat? Where have you thrown my words? Why do you hurry yourself to fall into the devil's pit? Why do you allow the enemy whom your have heard about, to blind you up? Haven't you received the commandment to surrender yourself into the hands of God and of your Abba? Haven't you heard that Abba wants your soul to be saved as your soul himself wants it? You shouldn't have transgressed the obedience to him whatever he had asked for the benefit of the brothers, because of satan making you to lose that by self-justification, so that both you and another not to benefit anything through you. This is because, by doing so, you show that you want to come upon you that "Woe" told to Pharisees, and the sword harbingered by Ezekiel (Ezek. 33: 1-6). Well! You are incapable of being beneficial to somebody. But why do you say no to him who is able to? Why have you made yourself "as a dog who comes back to his vomit" (Ps. 26: 11; 2 Pt. 2: 22) and "as a pig wallowing into mud, remaining unpersuaded in the callousness of his heart" (2 Pt. 2: 22)? Abba has commanded to you to tell him everything that happens, even thought something has taken place because of his mistake, but you still make him angry as the people did to Moses. Get ashamed now, reject the habit you have had until now, and come back. And the Lord will receive you, for He is merciful. Do not search for

the things pleasant to people, because otherwise you will be lost and you won't be the servant of God. Take heed at yourself, you miserable, and fear God.

And regarding the things said by you under your oath because of the wrath of your anger, it is not useful to you to keep those, because if you keep those you will transgress the commandment of the Lord Who says: "You shall not kill!" (Exod. 20: 13). This is for it is a better thing to repent in front of God for that what you have said in your oath, and you not to fulfill your oath, that to fall into the damnation of Herod who, in order to keep his ungodly oath, he cut off the head of John the Forerunner (Mt. 14: 7-10) and he fell off the eternal life and he was surrendered to the bitter and endless torments. It is more useful to you to repent and to ask for forgiveness from God Who can forgive you. This is because even Herod would have been happy if he had done this. But because he didn't do it, he has become threefold wicked and forever cursed. And Peter, the coryphée of the Apostles, on the opposite, after he sworn for three times and gave himself to anathema affirming that he doesn't know who the Savior was, he repented for that and he cried bitterly and with true repentance, and his sin was erased and he was received by the loving-of-people Master and Savior Christ. And he not only that was found worthy of hearing that word said by angels to the women: "Tell disciples and Peter" (Mk. 16: 7), but the Lord Himself asked Peter, in exchange for the three rejections, for three time: "Do you love me, Peter?" (Jn. 21: 15-17), showing that through the good repentance Peter was healed of the sin of his threefold denial. So, you will no longer swear yourself because that leads you to transgress God's commandment. And if you commit this sin, do not hesitate to repent. This is for Peter too, if he had kept his oath that he didn't know the Master, Peter would have remained stranger from Him and from His glory.

616. A brother who found out about these, he asked the same Great Oldman: You love said that the sinner can be liberated of her sins through repentance. But doesn't the sin need also the prayers of the saints too, or it is sufficient to him that what he does? And if he doesn't show a true repentance, but the saints pray for him, will his sins be erased?

Answer: If the man doesn't' do everything he can and if he doesn't unite that with the prayers of the saints, he won't benefit anything form the saints' prayer done for him. This is for if the saints restrain themselves and they pray for him, while he indulges himself to pleasures and to idleness, what benefit will those prayers bring to him? Then it is fulfilled that what was said: "One builds up and other tears down. What do they have more than the efforts?" (Sirach[1084] 34: 28). This is because, if it had been possible that him whom the saints are praying for, him to be saved without taking a little heed, there wouldn't have been any impediment for the saints to do that for all the sinners of the world. And even though the sinner makes some efforts, he still needs the prayers of the righteous. This is for the Apostle says: "The working prayer of the righteous can do much" (Jas. 5: 16). Therefore, when the saint and the righteous pray, the sinner must collaborate as well, according to his power, for his repentance, with the prayer of the saints, because of not being himself able to pay for his debts by himself. He brings a little form his part, and the prayer of the saints will bring much. This is for, as one having to carry ten measures of wheat, he cannot carry even two, but he finds a man who fears God and who ca carry nine measures, and so he will carry only one measure of wheat and so he will be saved and he won't be robbed by thieves on the road; it is likewise here too[1085]. The sinner resembles also to the man who owes one hundred (gold) coins and who, because of being him announced by his creditors that he smut pay his debt, he goes to a believer and rich man and pray that man to give him, out of love for people, as much ,money as that one could, and the rich man by seeing the trouble of the debtor, he has mercy on him and he tells him: "Brother, everything I have in my hands I will give it for you. Liberate yourself of that contract". So, the debtor must force himself to give the little he has, in order him to be liberated of many. This is because, if that merciful man doesn't see the

[1084] In the KJB this book, called *The Wisdom of Joshua the Son of Sirach (The Ecclesiastes)* is not present, but it is given in the ROB. The interested reader can find this book in an English translation on www.academia.edu, together with the other thirteen books not given in the KJB, under the title: *Bible Missing Texts*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1085] The prayer of him who wobbles on his feet because of his sins, it doesn't reach God powerfully, but it remains hesitating, unlike the prayer of him who has got fortified in cleanness and in love for God and for people. The sinner still thinks at the pleasure provided him by his sins, as at egotism. He doesn't' entirely communicate with God.

debtor bringing at least the ten gold coins he has, the rich will see that vainly will himself give his ninety gold coins, because that debt of a hundred gold coins still won't be erased.

617. Question: A layman who loved Christ, he asked the other Oldman: I pray you, Father, please explain to me in this thing, so that I will leave with joy. For my thought insists to do good out of my wealth, what will be more useful: to give away small amounts, or to give it away at once?

Answer: Brother, despite I am not able to answer you that appropriately, but you have the urge of the Scripture saying: "Dop not say: Go away and come back tomorrow and I will give you, when you could do a good, because we do not know what tomorrow till bring" (Prov. 3: 28). On the other hand, there are measures, and each one does his measure. There is one who can give a little out of his revenues. And there is another who gives the tenth part of his products, and another gives the fourth part, and another gives half. Each one gives according to his measure. And him who wants to reach the consummate measure, let him not ask me because of being I the last one among men, but let him ask our Teacher and Doctor of our souls, our Lord Jesus Who told to the rich one: "If you want to be consummate, sell all your wealth and share it to the poor, and you will have a treasure in heavens, and come and follow Me" (Mt. 19: 21). The presence of the death next to us let it uphold your thoughts. This is for it is hidden from anyone. So, let's strive to do good before being us taken away from here. This is because of not knowing us when the call will be made. Let's not allow ourselves, by any means, unprepared, so that we will be together with the five insane virgins who didn't put oil in their candles (Mt. 25: 1-12). Let's do everything we can, according to our helplessness, and good is the Lord of all people Who takes us together with the five wise virgins in His wedding room and to the untold Joy, together with Christ. Amen.

618. Question: A brother asked the same Oldman if he should receive from some people and then to share to the poor, because of being there some people who pray him to do that.

Answer; For it is about alms, not everybody can bear the told things, but only them who have reached the quietude and who can cry for their sins. This is because some brothers surrendered themselves to this serving and God knows what to do with them regarding that. This is for, how will they try to administrate foreign goods, once they have rejected their own goods? This was done also by the pious among saints Illarion. This is because he was prayed by somebody to receive a lot of money, but he answered that one: "You due to give away your goods, for you cross through cities and you know the villages. And I, because of leaving all my good, how will I be able to give away foreign goods?" (Blessed Jeronimus, *The Life of Saint Illarion*, 18; L.P.[1086] 21: 36).

619. Question: If one insists, saying: "If you do not accept you to share the goods, I won't give away anything", should I let the poor tormented by hunger?

Answer: As I told to our love before, there are some people who have surrendered themselves to this serving. But if you want to cry for your sins, do won't take heed at this thing, even if you see somebody dying in front of your monastic cell. Do not start sharing foreign goods and thus to top yourself from crying for your sins. And the owner of those goods, if he doesn't find somebody to do that service for him, then he will do it by himself, in order not to impede his own will.

620. Question: A loving-of-Christ layman asked the same Oldman: If somebody asks someone to bestow him something, and he who has been asked for that something he doesn't have that, should him borrow that thing in order him to be able to bestow it?

Answer: If somebody is asked for giving away that what he doesn't have, he won't be condemned. This is for Apostle Peter, when asked by somebody to give him some alms, he answered: "Silver and gold I do not have" (Acts 3: 6). And he didn't borrow in order him to be able to give. And if somebody

[1086] Latin Patrology. (E. l. t.'s n.)

has only that much as he needs, neither then must he spend that what he has, haphazardly, in order not to lack that and so him to get troubled because of missing that thing. And if him who is asked for, he tell him who asks him: "Forgive me, I do not have anything to give you", and that's not a lie, for he who has only that much as he needs, he doesn't have what to give to somebody else. But let him tall to that one who asks from him: "Forgive me, for I have only that much as I need". Think at the five virgins who were begged by the other five virgins to give them oil for their candles, but they answered: "Lest us too to run out of oil" (Mt. 25: 9). From his part, Apostle Paul tells to Corinthians: "Let your abundance to fulfill the lack of others" (2 Cor. 8: 14), but he also said: "But not so that to be relief to others and trouble to yourself" (Ibid 13).

621. Question: Explain me, Father, that what you said: "If one has only that much as he needs, he must not give that away haphazardly, lest himself will end into trouble". How can one reach into trouble for doing something willingly?

Answer: Everything must be done with right-reckoning. And the right-reckoning consists of somebody working according to his measure. This also assures him that he won't be bothered later by his thoughts. But working over his own power means lack of right-reckoning, either in doing the good, or in something else. And that will bring him, later on, to disturbance and to upset. It is good and it is very good that the widow gave him who needed (3 Kings[1087] 17: 10-12). This isn't a bad thing. But when the man does something over his measure, he won't be able to bear that. And God doesn't ask us things which are above our measure.

622. So, if one is rich and he has over that what he needs, won't he need right-reckoning?

Answer: He too needs the right-reckoning, lest he will do something over the power of his thought and so he will be sorry about that. That's why Paul too said: "Neither with sadness nor

[1087] In KJB we usually use: 1 Kings. (E. l. t.'s n.)

forcedly, for God love him who bestows joyfully" (2 Cor. 9: 7). The consummate things belong to consummated ones, and the small things belong to the tiny. He who is consummate he manly endures his poverty and he despises the whole richness and he endures everything without disturbance, according to the Apostle who says: "I can do everything into Him Who strengthens me, Christ" (Phil. 4: 13), and: "The world has been crucified to me" (Gal. 6: 14).

623. Question: He who doesn't give with pleasure, what whoudl him do in order him to get accustomed to give with pleasure?

Answer: He must remember the reward from God given to them who give away, and let them start with the small things, while always thinking at that that him who gives a few things, he will be given a few things, but him who given many things he will be given many things, according to what was written: "he who sows with avarice, with avarice he will reap, and he who sows abundantly, abundantly he will reap" (2 Cor. 9: 6). And, gradually, hit thought will desire for getting the abundant reward, and so he will ever advance towards consummation. And he may reach thus to consummate measures and he can deprive on himself of earthly things and he can live into ghost, with the heavenly realities.

624. Question: If somebody bewitched by the start of doing the good recklessly spends even the things he needs for himself, and then he will feel sorry about that, how must he comfort himself, in order him not to be overwhelmed by the devilish sadness?

Answer: He will despise himself firstly for his lack of right-reckoning, and then he will raise his thought out of sadness, by saying: "Now after I have spent for a deed, powerful is the loving-of-people God so that Him to take care of me too".

625: Question: If there are two poor and I do not have enough to give to both of them, which one will I chose?

Answer: It must be chosen the more helpless one.

626. Question: If I was to give away, but my thought makes me hesitate, what will I do?

Answer: Examine and find out and if that is because of your avarice, you will give even something more that you owe to give. For instance, add there a small sum of money, and you will find mercy[1088].

627. Question: Please explain me this too, Master Abba. He who doesn't have anything to give away, how will him be partaker to the blessed announced by our Savior to them who will be on the right hand: "Come, you the blessed of My Father, and inherit the Kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I has hungry and you gave Me to eat" etc. (Mt. 25: 34)?

Answer: Brother, because the Apostles did not have money, aren't they partakers to this blessing? There are groups (level) and groups. And God spoke towards each one according to the group which that one belongs to. This is for God showed, through *Blessings*, the differences among them who are saved. From the realties submitted to the senses one can understand the spiritual realities as well. Suppose that there is a man who has fresh vegetables and he sell those for a dinar. And among craftsmanships it is likewise. One is a carpenter and he takes five dinars per day. Another is mason and he takes the same payment. Another has a different craftsmanship and he take the same payment. The craftsmanships differ, the products differ as well. But the honor and the market are the same. Apply these to the salvation of the soul of them wo have money and they share to the poor without searching for vain-glory. To all of them it is said: "Come, you the blessed ones of My Father, and inherit the Kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world"

[1088] In all these measures are described the ways which the man ca liberate himself in, from the chains of his egotism, and which the man can enter in communion through, with God and with the people.

(Mt. 5: 3). And again: "Blesse are the persecuted for righteousness, for the Kingdom of Heavens is theirs" (Mt. 5: 10). And the other ones who are blessed, despite differing in blessings, they won't be strangers to the Kingdom of Heavens. So, if you have nothing to give away as alms, you will make yourself poor in spirit, in order you to inherit the Kingdom of Heavens together with the saints[1089]; cry for your sins from this world in order you to be comforted by the things said into Gospel; hunger and thirst for justice, in order you to be satiated by it; be clean in your heart, in order you to see God into His glory; make yourself a peacemaker within your heart, in order you to be called as son of God; prepare yourself through good deeds in order you to be banished, for righteousness, from city to city, namely, because of the evil thought form the devil into the good thought from God, in order you to be gladdened by inheriting the Kingdom of heavens. Endure the condemnation of the persecution and the liar defamation, for the Lord, in order you to rejoice into gladness, by discovering in front of you your abundant rewards into heavens.

628. Question of the same one towards the same one: For each Blessing requires a virtue, will that be enough, Father, a sole virtue, for one to be saved?

Answer: Like the body is one, but it has many limbs, and if the body misses one of its limbs it won't be a complete body, you smut understand likewise the inward man. The inwards man has the virtues as several limbs, and if he misses even one, he won't have been reached his consummation. And like the craftsman who knows hie craftsmanship, he is experienced in other craftsmanships as well, likewise here, the man possessing all virtues he is not know and he is not called but according to that one which the grace of the Ghost sines within him more into[1090].

[1089] IN order you to enter the Kingdom of the consummate communion.

[1090] Out of each one shines especially a certain virtue. But connected to that virtue, there are all the other virtues. A gentle man cannot be stingy, though he is mainly characterized by his gentleness.

629. Question: Another layman who was loving-of Christ, he gave somebody some goods in order to be shared to the poor, by trusting that man. And he told him: "Takle and you will be held accountable to God". But that one didn't' understand that he placed upon that one a huge burden. And he reckoned that even he wasn't told that, once he accepted to do that, he will be held accountable to God. the same Oldman was asked about that and he answered:

Answer; he who accepted got deceived, for he dared to believe that he can be accountable to God about everything. But who dares to tell about himself that he has a clean heart? Such a thing belongs to the consummate Fathers. He should have told him who gave him those goods: "I am not worthy to receive this in order to give account to God. For I am a sinner. I will strive to collaborate with the whole my power to this deed, but it belongs to God to help me to collaborate according to His will". And if he said so, that would have been reckoned him as humbleness and God wouldn't have condemned him because he had believed in his power. But because he accepted this thing with confidence in himself, it will be asked by God him to give account exactly[1091]. But neither him who has should ask the brother for such a reckoning. This is because by that, despite he seemed to trust the brother, he actually reckoned the brother, without realizing it, as unworthy of being trusted. He should, once he trusted that brother, to let the thing on God's responsibility and not to doubt that brother. This is because him who doubt about somebody, he must not trust that somebody.

630. There are some people who accept to be imparted publicly with the shared things. But others could feel ashamed of publicly being given those things, because of their rank. And then, there are also those who are sick and who stay within their houses. Should one give the mercy to some people in special ways, or everyone should be given the same way?

[1091] If he hadn't trusted himself that he had been able to give account to God, he would have reckoned, with humbleness, that only God could have helped him, and God wouldn't have held him accountable for an exact reckoning, but God would have placed on the scale favorable to that man also his humbleness.

Answer: Place all of them who receive, openly, in the same group, except those having some weakness or sickness. To these ones you should give a little more. And place them who feel ashamed and who lie down because of their sickness into another group, and give them small plus according to their needs and according to what you have and what you like.

631. Question: If him who gave money to somebody in order to share either to the Fathers, or to the poor, he tells that one to share those money in an open place, and nearby there are some very needy people, won't that be appropriate to give something to those people as well?

Question: It won't be inappropriate, if they are very needy, they to be given something too. This is for, by not knowing that one that others need too, he didn't tell him to give something to those too. But if he commanded him not to give in another place, but only in that place alone, let him not transgress that commandment. So, he must ask, previously, and then him to do whatever he is told to. And so, he will be worriless.

632. Question: If this job needs together-workers, if I summon some people whom I trust, can I entrust this job to them unhesitatingly?

Answer: If you have reached to trust them, you won't hesitate to entrust them such a job. This is for all the things are uncovered to God. And God will know our inward things, and God will give to everybody according to their deed. (Ps. 88: 31[1092]). And if they keep something for themselves, they will see.

[1092] In KJB we have: Ps. 89: 31-32: "If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; // Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes."; in ROB we have: Ps. 88: 31-32: "If they disregard My righteousness and if My commandments they do not observe, // I will examine with a staff their lawlessness and with beatings their sins." (E. l. t.'s n.)

633. Question: If I find out that somebody among them has kept something for himself, what will I do? Will if reproach him and will I take that form him?

Answer: If you surely find out that he touched something, you will first examine if his thought can accept to be reproached. And if yet, you will tell him about that thing, gently and advising him, according to God. And take that away from him. But if he doesn't accept to be reproached, you won't harm his conscience, lets him will reach, because of his shame, into an even worse state. And let him have that what he has taken. This is for he has taken from the things of God. And God knows better if that one has taken because he needed, and God know hos wo judge that one's deed.

634. Question: Should I trust again one like this, in the future?

Answer: If you find out that he did that on other occasions too, and that he uses to behave like that, you won't trust him again. But of he has always been good but now he has been kidnapped by the devil, or if he took that because he needed that, it won't be inappropriate you to trust him again. This is for he will surely correct himself. Take care only not to offend him.

635. What should I give to the poor who come through houses?

Answer: Whatever you have at hand, either a little food of drink, either two pennies or one penny. And you only should give without getting yourself upset, but in the fear of God, for through that is served God[1093].

[1093] Any giving of alms must be reckoned as being directed towards God. By that it is highlighted the value of the man whom you give alms to, regardless hos poor he was. The mercy doesn't despise him, but the mercy cherished the poor, by seeing the poor tied to God and as an environment transparent to God, through whom God tests him who gives alms.

636. Question: It happens to me to have a thing which is utterly necessary to me and there are also other things not so necessary as either wine of bread. And my thought tells me to give to the poor out of what is utterly necessary to me. But it is difficult to me, namely to give them the better things, and to keep for myself the inferior things. But when Fathers visit me, I reckon to honor them more than I do to the poor, and I try hosting the Fathers the better I can.

Answer: Regarding the poor, for we haven't reached yet to reckon them as our equals, neither have we reached to love our neighbor as ourselves, do according to your power, while knowing your weakness. Give them the second quality goods. Regarding the Fathers, you should honor them more, for they are the servants of God. This is for it was written: "To him with the honor, honor" (Rom. 13: 7). This is for God too has honored them more.

637. Question: Another layman who was loving-of Christ, he asked the same Oldman John, if he was to live or to die. Ane the Oldman answered him thus:

If I told you that you were to die, you would work for your salvation forcedly. This is because, by seeing yourself into the mouth of the death, you will throw away your things as being forced to. But if you expect to live for a lone time, and you feel the desire for being you saved, you will direct your thought towards good in an unforced manner. And then, even if you died soon, you would work for your salvation feely, and nor forcedly.

638. Question: But how? If somebody does something good because of fearing his death, won't be that reckoned him towards salvation?

Answer: Are not the same that salvation worked forcedly and the salvation worked freely. But that too is better than doing nothing. This is because doing nothing is towards the perdition of the soul, as long as we are master upon

ourselves[1094]. So, by knowing that both of them are possible, you will use your deeds as a sapient man, and like the insane virgins did, and who were locked outside the wedding room, because they didn't' have the fruit of the giving alms and of doing the good.

639. Question: If somebody keeps in his soul the thought of death, and because of that he does the good, doesn't he prepare to himself a willing reward?

Answer: Keeping the memory of the death is good. This is for by doing that one thinks that he is mortal and the mortal is not eternal. And he who knows that he is not eternal, he will willingly leave the things of this age. Out of ceaselessly thinking at death, he will learn how to do the good in a free manner. But he who sees his death in front of his eyes and he does the good because of that, he isn't the same in his deed. The good done by this one was done because of fearing his death and that is forcedly.

640. Tell me, Father, what benefit has the soul out of the good he did willingly, and what is the benefit out of the unwilling good?

Answer: The willing good guards the soul against death, consummately, while the unwilling good brings a diminution to this grace and it is lower.

[1094] When we work because of fearing our close death, we show ourselves incapable of liberating ourselves from being mastered by our passions because of being us habituated to them.

In all these questions and answers it is shown how the detachment from our egotistic self means detaching ourselves from the material things, it means relativizing the material things, in comparison to the unparallelly higher value of the soul. The egotism doesn't part with the good, but he grabs them. But by doing so he forgets about himself, thought he seems to be interested in himself. But he is not interested in his true self, but he is interested in the external and perishing things. Only him who gladly separate himself from these goods, only him enters the communion with God and with his fellow humans, and by that he will discover his true self.

641. If somebody lives in indifference, but he sees himself about to die, and he promises to God that if he lives longer, he will strive to be pleasant to God, will him be bestowed a prolongation of his life?

Answer: God is the One Who knows the heart and He looks at the righteousness of the heart. So, if God see that one truly repenting and with the whole his soul, God will give him an add to his live. This is for he says: "May God give you according to your heart" (Ps. 19: 5[1095])[1096]. And the will of God is our salvation. This is for Himself said: "Alive I am and I do not want the death of the sinner but to turn back and to be alive" (Hek. 18: 23). Therefore, let's direct our heart towards Him and let's throw all our worries upon Him" (1 Pt. 5: 7). And God will lead our life towards the things beneficial to our salvation.

642. Tell me, Father, has there been established a term for the end of the world?

Answer: Without any doubt, there will be an end of the world. But God, by seeing us fulfilling the things pleasant to Him, He prolongs the time. This is for it was said: "The righteousness adds days, and the years of the sinners will be diminished" (Prov. 10: 27). This is for the commandment of God establishes the border of the human life. This is for at the question asked by Apostles, the Lord answered: "It doesn't belong to you to know the times established by God with His power" (Acts 1: 7).

643. Another loving-of Christ layman, falling sick and being engulfed by fever, he asked the Great Oldman to pray for him for his pain to be alleviated. And he even sent to the Great

[1095] In KJB we have: Ps. 20: 5: "We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners: the Lord fulfil all thy petitions."; in ROB we have: Ps. 19: 5: "We will rejoice of your salvation and into the name of our God we will be glorified. May the Lord fulfill all your asks." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1096] God sees beyond that what we promise at the surface because of a passing sentiment of fear. And on the basis of what God sees, He know whether we are going to fulfil our promises or not. On this knowledge of our deep self, it is based God's prescience and His decision whether He will fulfill of not that what we ask Him.

Oldman some water to be blessed and then him to drink that water. This was because he couldn't endure that fever. And the Great Oldman prayer, and that one drank the blessed water, and his fever and his pain ceased immediately. And the brother wondered and extolled God for that, and he told some people about the work committed through the Great Oldman. But later on, his fever tuned back powerfully. And he sent a message to the Great Oldman praying him to have again mercy on him. And the Great Oldman answered him:

Answer: This has happened to you in order to stop your much-speaking. And he was fully alleviated through the prayer of the Great Oldman. But since then, he was afraid to let anyone know about his healing, and about other benefactions he received from the Saint.

644. Question: The same brother, by seeing Abba telling to the coming brothers about the wonders of the Holy Oldman, he asked the other Oldman John about that. And he learnt from him what the purpose of Abba was, so that he told nothing more. But the same brother asked again the same Oldman: How comes, Father John, that I see Abba speaking for hours about the virtues of the Great Oldman and I am gladdened by his words, as being towards building. But on some other occasions, it seems to me that his words do not build but they rather offend, for he praises his Fathers and that upsets me. I suffer this also relatedly to other Fathers from the world because if seems to me that they speak vainly. I pray you, therefore, Father, tell me about this and pray for me so that I could be delivered of these and of the evil thought.

The answer of John: Brother, may God give you to hear and to understand and to go to deeds the things spoken to you. That what you are telling me it is self-justification and condemnation. It is self-justification because you reckon yourself worthy of telling stories. And it is condemnation because it says: "And what are you telling these for? Don't you remember that the Ghost blows wherever He wants?" (Jn. 3: 8). Can you tell me why the Lord after healing some people He commanded them not to tell anybody what happened (Mk. 7: 6)? And to another He told: "God and show yourself to the priest

and bring the due things for your cleanness", and He added: "to bear witness to them" (Mt. 8: 4; Lk. 5: 14); and: "Talk about all the things God did to you" (Lk. 8: 39). The things uttered by Abba are towards the benefit of them who listen to those with fear; and those things are towards condemnation to them who do not receive those with faith. And those things haven't been understood by you until now, because until now your hart has been changing. This is for the Apostle says: "We are good fragrance to God to them who are saved and to them who perish; to some of them we are smell of death towards death, to other we are fragrance of life towards life. But who is capable of that? For we are not as the many who sell the word of God" (2 Cor. 2: 15-17). So, if you doubt about the Oldman because he rebuked you for speaking and he didn't rebuke Abba, you must not judge because there is something in the middle. But you must humble yourself in your heart, saying: The Great Oldman rebuked me for I am unworthy, while he allowed Abba to talk about those things for the benefit of the listeners. Let's understand how the Great Oldman brings us on all the ways towards humbleness, in order us to diminish ourselves and us to reckon ourselves as unworthy. And we do not want to bow down our neck. Let's, therefore, come to humbleness, and God will unveil His mysteries, as for instance when we must keep our silence and when we must speak, so that both of these to be towards the benefit of ours and of the listeners. Let's, therefore, do not judge and do not despise the listeners, in order not to be ourselves condemned instead of being us built up. This is because if we ask our thought, saying: "Do we know what he speaks like, him who speaks? Does he do that by the work of the Ghost?", we will surely find out that we do not know that. So, let's think at the good things and not at the bad things. This is because the evil one thinks at the evil things, and the good one thinks at the good things into Christ Jesus our Lord Whom it is due the glory forever. Amen.

645. Question: Another loving-of Christ layman who had an illness in his body, he sent to be asked the same Oldman John to pry for him, in order him to achieve his healing. And the Oldman answered him: The Lord is going to heal you soon. But that one still remained ill. But he trusted the Oldman so that he wondered, saying: "What could be in the middle? This is for the

Oldman doesn't lie. For God speaks within him, but I still haven't been healed". And he came and asked the Great Oldman about that.

The answer of Barsanuphius: If we believe that God doesn't lie (Tit. 1: 2) and that "to him who believes all the things are possible" (Mt. 9: 23), how comes that you haven't received that what you have desired? Hasn't that been because of dwelling within you, unnoticed by you, your faithlessness? I truly believe that everything told you by God through brother John, you are going to receive. But I pray your love for Jesus not to attract me to the horse races, for I am old. And I am telling you these things showing the unity of soul that you told you have it with us. This is for nobody divides his soul in two parts, in order to work different things. Still, find out that I am praying to God until God will bring you to His gates for confession and in Hid courtyards in songs of praise (Ps. 99: 3-4[1097])[1098].

Hearting these words the brother wondered hos the Oldman knew about his addiction to the horse races, and he glorified God. And since then, he avoided that evil game.

646. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: I have a brother united in soul with me and we lived thus as brothers, by having everything in common. But not I took a wife, and we have remained the same further on. And I am

[1097] In KJB we have: Ps. 100: 4: "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name."; in ROB we have: Ps. 99: 3-4: "And we are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter His gates with praise and in His courtyards with praise Him with songs of praise. // Sing His name!" (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1098] As a half of the soul of the other souly father, he is restless for him, but on the other hand he prays for that one too to be brought, together with himself, to the gates of the Lord where he to confess his sins, at the "doors of the repentance" and then, consequently to his confession those gates to be open and they both to enter the Lord's courtyards, singing together, with you, songs of praise to God. The Oldman wants to impropriate the confession of that one, as they would have sinned together, in order him to produce in that one the urge to confession. Between the souls who love on one another there no longer is a total separation, as there no longer is such a separation between Christ and us. That's why Christ remain in state of sacrifice and of sufferance for us, until the end of the world. And that's why we too are imparted with His sacrifice "in communion", to that each of us to enter the communion with Christ not isolated by in communion with all the other people.

warred by my thought lets my marriage caused in his heart some doubts about me and so he no longer feels the same for me?

The answer of Barsanuphius: If you want to find out what he has in his heart, you will find that out in this way: Examine your heart to see whether, after you married, you still feel for him the same as before. And if your feeling has remained the same, you will know that his heart is according to your heart, by the help of God[1099].

647. Ask towards the same one: Another loving-of Christ layman sent a request towards the same Great Oldman for the Oldman to pray for him, for God to remember him in His Kingdom.

Answer: Lo, Lord Jesus Christ hasn't ashamed my face, but He bestowed me your soul and He has given me the grace for Him to remember you in His Kingdom[1100]. So, by receiving this grace (gift), let's maintain ourselves full of gratitude, and let's not become like some pigs which cannot discern the precious pearls. You must know that if somebody is honored by somebody else, he must honor himself too. So, by being honored by God without us being worthy of that, let's make ourselves worthy of Him. And let's honor God by keeping His holy commandments[1101]. This is for Himself said: "If I am Father, where is my honoring? And if I am the Lord, where is My glory?" (Mal. 1: 6). May God the All-Keeper help you, son, to listen to and to guard the useful things.

[1099] The soul of one being like a half to the soul of another, the feelings of one cross to another too. That is like a wind that, when blowing upon a side of the man, it blows from the other side too.

[1100] The Oldman reckons himself to tightly united with his spiritual son that he reckons the salvation given to that one by God and his remembrance by God as a gift given him by God Himself. Behold what sentiment the priest must pray with, at the Liturgy, in order the believers who ask for that to be remembered in God's Kingdom: as the priest would pray for himself.

[1101] If God honored us through the embodiment of His Son with the quality as His sons, we too must make ourselves worthy of the worthiness given by Him to us, by bestowing us this quality through Baptism. And let's by this ourselves to honor and to love God Who honored and loved us. And let's honor God and let's love God by fulfilling His commandments with the filial feeling and power given us by Him as Baptism. And by this too, we actualize the worthiness given us by God.

648. Question: A garden that belongs to my grandsons who live far from here it has been asked by some people as place for prayer. My grandsons have given me the task to establish with the prospective buyers the price of that garden. Noy I am caught between two thoughts: one thought tells me that I must show a lower price and so to make of it a gift for the house of the Lord, once that garden is asked for a holy place; the other thought tells me to show faithfulness to them who commanded to establish the right price. And I do not know which thought must I lean on. I fear God, but I also reckon as a sin to inflict loss upon the owners of the garden. What should I do, Father?

Answer: Show them the right price, and urge them by telling them: "You know that all of us are debtors to our masters, the saints. So, if the Lord will let you know that you should reduce the price, it will depend on you to do that". S, you write them that. And it will belong to them to do that or not to do it. And you will have no remorse after the completion of that thing. It won't be a burden or a mistake to be asked that what is right, even if that if for the house of the Lord. But it is useful that if the owner of that place is not pressed by needs, he to reduce the price, as much as he can, for the house of the Lord. This is for he will have a multiplied benefit by doing so. But if that is not possible to him, God won't ask him for that; God only asks for his benevolence.

Hearing those, that brother left rejoicing and praising God.

649. Question: I want to hire some people as my helpers, but I hesitate because I think whether I will truly benefit of that; so, tell me, should I do that or not?

Answer: Know that we too have a Master, and if we obey our Master He will determine dour servants to obey us too[1102]. God and hire them in the name of the Lord.

[1102] If your servant sees you obeying God, he too will obey you, for the Lord, or he will obey the Lord together with you.

650. Question: If the law of God commands me something while the world's law decides against that, what should I do? This is for the live of the society if being ruled by the world's laws and he who transgresses those laws he will work inequity.

Answer: The law of God is more worthy to be obeyed. This is for it speaks about the salvation of the soul. And the law of the world, because of being bodily, it speaks about bodily things.

651. What do mean the words: "Have mercy on the poor at judgment"? (Exod. 23: 3).

Answer: That what that says is this: He who judges some things, let him judge rightly and let him not transgress the righteousness, on the motif of having mercy on the poor. But he doesn't commit any injustice by urging the enemy to have mercy on the poor.

652. Question: If some of the father, whom I trust very much, tells me to do something that seems to me contrary to what it right, why should I do? Will I transgress the commandment given to me?

Answer: The Spiritual Fathers to not say anything in vain, but they say everything for the salvation of the soul. So, you will tell him that what you will think, and then you will do what he will tell you to do. And you will not transgress the commandment. This is for the things which are pleasant to God, they are righteous and useful.

653. Another loving-of Christ layman had a bad servant who ran away and, after a while, that servant turned back to him. And he asked the Oldman John if he should keep that servant or not. And the Oldman John told him to let that servant go, but that servant started to behave well. So, he felt heavy about letting that servant go. And he sent again a question whether he should let that servant go or not.

The answer of John: For the time being, you can keep your servant by teaching him and by teaching you through him[1103]. And if that servant corrects himself, that will be good. And if that servant perseveres in the same behaviors, and you endure him for the Lord, that will be good too, for you will be rewarded for your patience. But if you see that you can't stand him, and you are harmed by that, you will let him go away, by remembering some of the saints who said: "If you see somebody drowning in the river, do not give him your hand to pull you too in, but give him your staff. And if you can escape him through your staff, that will be good. And if not, you will let your staff go so that yourself not to be lost too" (Les Sentences des Pères du désert, Nouveau Recueil, Solesmes, 1970, no. 472, p. 74).

654. After a few days, that servant tempted his master by stealing something. And the Lord covered the master by the prayers of the saints[1104], so that that servant ran away. And the master came and thanked to the Oldman for the protection he received, and the master rebuked himself of not having let that's servant go after he received the first answer. And the Oldman answered him like this:

I didn't tell you to let that servant go in order you to banish him away, but I told you that because of the weakness of your thought, because you couldn't stand to be tempted by that servant. This is for we are sinners and we are not allowed to banish anybody away. This is because, if you were able to suffer his laziness, you would be rewarded for your patience. Actually, some of the Fathers spoke to Abba Poemen about a certain Oldman who couldn't stand his lazy disciple. And Abba Poemen told them: "If I were him, I would place a little pillow under his head". And those ones told him: "And what would you say to God? And he answered: "I would say to God: Lord, you said: "Take firstly, the beam out of your eye and then you will see how to get the stray out of the eye of your brother" (Mt. 7: 5) (Paterikon, Poemen: 131).

[1103] Teach him the good things, but teach yourself the patience by doing that.

[1104] They protected the master from knowing about that theft before the running away of his servant, so that not to rebuke him angrily.

655. Question: So, the old man was right not to rebuke his brother?

Answer: Brother, the old man didn't allow that brother unrebuked without a reason. This is because he rebuked that brother for several times but the brother didn't accept the reproaches. And by seeing that that brother didn't get corrected, the old man left that thing at the judgment of God, saying: "God know what it is useful. This is for my brother is better than I am". This was done by the consummate ones for they didn't dare to judge anyone. They did that in order to shame up them who are nothing but they still judge everybody.

656. Question: When my servant mistakes and I want to reproach him, what purpose should I reproach him on?

Answer: On the purpose of that love according to God, so that by being him corrected through reproaching, he to stop sinning and that to be him towards the salvation of his soul. That's why reproaching must not be done angrily. This is for the good isn't born out of evil. But, if your thought gets angry, you will wait until your thought will be peaceful again. And then you will reproach him kindly, into the fear of God.

657. But when I want to reproach him, my thought tells me: "You rather will commit sin. How can you reproach him while not correcting yourself?". And this stops my rebuking.

Answer: This thought is from the devil, and it aims to allow the brother uncorrected, and so you will be held accountable for his sins. So, you must tell to your thought: "It is obvious that I mistake much, and I admit that. But I don't want to be held accountable both for me and for him. This is for God asks me to correct my brother"[1105]. And after you have

[1105] If I reproach him, I will he held accountable only for myself. And it is better to be held accountable for my mistake, than for other's done because I haven't done anything to correct him.

reproached him with sparing and with the fear of God, you will tell to yourself the Apostle's word: "You who teach somebody else, why don't you teach on yourself?" (Rom. 2: 21). And so, you will be correcting that one with humble cogitation.

658. When I see somebody cursing the religion and blaspheming the right-faith, I get angry with him on the motif of my zeal. What is this?

Answer: You have heard that the correction through evil it rather does bad than good. So, you should talk to him who curses, by reproaching him gently and with long-patience into the fear of God. And if you see yourself disturbed, you should say nothing to him.

659. Question: It happens to me that when I meet somebody, I look at him passionately and I am wounded in my soul. And if the need to see him again occurs, I will no longer be able to look at him. And by that I make him suspicious. And it happened to me to even close my eyes, because I cannot stand his look. And I am troubled and I do not what I should do. So, pray for me, master, and send me a word of life and medicines of your love for people.

Answer: You love asked me about the passionate look at somebody who is present in a certain place. This obviously comes from the devil's wars. But from the devil comes also the fact of thinking at these things with the mind. So, you should remember the corruption and the stench of our nature, as we are about to enter our tombs. But why should I speak to you about corruption? Wouldn't be better for you to place in front of your eyes the fearsome judgment of God, that is to come? And what will be the inheritance of them who have done such things? And how will you be able to endure the big shame of being our deeds shown in front of the angels and of the archangels and of all people, in front of the Righteous Judge? And, how it is shot up the mouth of them who did such deeds? (Ps. 62: 12[1106]). Let's fear him who says: "Do not deceive

[1106] Unidentified content. (E. l. t.'s n.)

yourself, neither the fornicators, nor them who commit adultery, nor the Malachite, nor the Sodomites, they won't inherit the Kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6: 9-10); and "him who looks at a woman to lust her" etc.; and "if you eye offends you, pluck it out" (Mt. 5: 28-29).

You should remember these things and avoid the often meetings with the people whom you are with in this sort of war. On the other hand, do not show them why do you avoid them, lets you to make them think evil thoughts too. And if you need to talk to them, you will call the name of God to your help, saying: "Lord Jesus, cover me and help my weakness!". And you dare, for the arrow of the enemies will be shattered. This is for His name caused the destruction of the evil. Answer a few things to the many things told to you. And do not give to those things your hearing, or to your thoughts, by restrain yourself into decency and non-disturbance, so that nobody could know what is happening within you. And even if you take power from doing these things, you still won't be confident when it comes about your enemies. This is because of being they shameless, and even if they have been defeated for tens of thousands of times, they will still start the war again. But the bearer of victory is God. God will help the man's humbleness, for He wanted to embody Himself right for that[1107].

660. Question: What does it mean the word: "Take heed not to be you kidnapped by the thought of the fornication"?

Answer: This word matches not only the fornication, but it matches all the sins. This is suffered by the mind because of its scattering. So, the man must know how to gather himself within himself, by saying: "Lord, forgive me for Your holy name, because this thing has happened to me because of my carelessness. And deliver me from scattering and from all the traps of the enemy, for Your is the glory forever. Amen". And the kidnapping is shown like this: If somebody speaks and his mind is scattered, he speaks about something and then his mind is kidnapped by something else. This is the kidnapping. And if

[1107] God embodied Himself into the human humbleness, in order Him to be close to our humbleness. The Almighty God strengthens the humble one who doesn't lock up himself to God's power through his apparent power.

somebody works on something and his mind scatters him from that thing, he will break, because of forgetfulness, the thing he works on, or he will produce more than needed. Abd this too is kidnapping.

It happens likewise in the case of the fornication thought. It happens that while the man talks to somebody, the enemy attracts his mind away from God. Then he will be attracted, because of the sharing, to the lust for fornication. This too is kidnapping. This is because not out of thinking to fornication has that happened, but he has been kidnapped because of his forgetfulness. One like this is resembling to a traveler who, because of being inattentive, he leaves the right road and take a wrong road. But he must come to his sense by waking himself up, as it was said. And he must run to the mercy of God. This is for God is merciful and he will receive him as on the profligate son. We know with how much benevolence that one was received (Lk. 15: 20-24). And when this war is sown into thought not by scattering, we will have to remain awake and not to allow ourselves to get sweetened and to tarry in it.

661. Question: If I need to talk to a woman, what should I do? And, how should I behave while discussing? Tell me, if on the ground of faith or of compassion, could I engage in their businesses?

Answer: We reckon that all the talking to women will harm them who do not understand the godlike things. So, you must avoid that as much as you can. And do not indulge yourself to discussions with women. This is because of not being that beneficial to you, even though they have good behaviors. And if the need drives us sometimes to such a discussion, for some bargaining, or for something else, let's place in our mind, previously this comparison: As a man who gets close to a fire in order to satisfy his needs, he takes care of not being him burnt by that fire, let's us too to take care likewise when approaching women as we would approach fire. And let's assure ourselves on all ways and into the fear of God, in order the seemed benefit not to become a great loss to us. And if we want to live totally into God, we will talk to women through the mediation of some other person. Let's not look them in the face, and let's not throw our glance at them. Let's

neither tarry in discussions with women. Because out of this it will be born the fire of the lust. But let's strive to get rid of them in a hurry, while praying God to save us at the time of than need, from the trap laid the devil in front of us. And let's ceaselessly remember God. This is for great is His power that covers our weakness into Christ Jesus our Lord Whom to be the glory forever. Amen.

662. Question: Another loving-of Christ layman asked the Great Oldman whether it is beneficial to him to leave his wife in order him to become a monk.

The answer of Barsanuphius: Son, do not leave her because if you do that you will transgress the commandment of the Apostle that says: "You have tied yourself to your woman, do not search for untying" (1 Cor. 7: 27). This is because otherwise, if she commits sins and if she directs herself towards evil, that sin will fall upon you, except whether the separation has been done with agreement and together advising.

663. Question: Another loving-of Christ layman asked the same Great Oldman, saying: What should I do, because of being is quickly engulfed by passions?

Answer: Do not agree your passions and turn your eyes away in order you not to see vanity, and stop your hands from greediness. And God will liberate you from your passions. So, live decently. And to not eat of drink to your satiation. And so you will humiliate your passions and you will find out your resting[1108].

664. Question: Another loving-of Christ layman, who was a professor in the outside sciences, he asked the Great Oldman if it was good him to advance to a superior level.

[1108] There where the passions are absent, there will be resting: there won't be ambitions, or worries, or envy, or anger, or sadness, or disturbance, or agitation.

Answer: "Do not get haughty" (1 Tim. 6: 17), and you will find grace form God and thankfulness from people, and gather many things there where you are.

665. Question: The same one asked the other Oldman about the same thing.

The answer of John: God has chosen the humble things of the world. Keep your humbleness and God will help you in a hurry.

666. Question: The same one asked the same Oldman John to pray for a possessed man.

Answer: Let him refrain himself as much as he can and they who pray for him will be heard. This is for "much can the working prayer of the righteous" (Jas. 5: 16). And the Lord said: "This nation doesn't get out except by fasts and prayers" (Mt. 17: 21; Mk. 9: 29)[1109].

667. Question: Another loving-of Christ layman askes the same Great Oldman, saying: Some thieves broke into our house because of our sins, but they dint' take anything. Should I set in motion the inquiry for they to be captured, or should I pretend that I know nothing about the whole happening?

Answer: If we reckon that the thieves broke in because of our sins, and God, for His love for people, He didn't allow any harm to be done to us, why would we want to avenge ourselves and not to let all the thing to God's care, as He said: "Mine is the avenge, I will reward" (The Second Law 32: 35; Rom. 12: 19)? If we fear God, when we see them suffering something, we must help them according to our power. But because we haven't reach to such a measure, let's not fall into the vain-

[1109] The fasts and the prayers strengthen the will and they appease the man's disturbance that goes all the way to being possesses. The fasts and the prayers direct the man towards overcoming that what troubles him, by making him aware of the relationship with God.

glory, so that let's do them neither harm nor good[1110]. And let's give thanks to Him Who hasn't done to us according to our sins[1111].

668. Question: But if the thieves have stolen something from us, what will we have to do?

Answer: It is in the power of the consummate ones to despise everything. And them who are on an inferior level, they can take back the stolen things, or they can let the thieves to keep some of the stolen things, by thinking at their poverty. Sometimes this can make somebody to use the laws disregarded by the thieves. But let's know that this thing is the offshoot of the love for money and it harms our soul. And we transgress the commandment that says: "If somebody want to suit you in a justice court and to take away your coat from you, give him your shirt too" (Mt. 5: 40).

669. Question: Does that mean, Father, that if somebody want to take away my coat form me, I should give him my coat immediately? But there are many evil and cunning people who would gladly deprive somebody of all his things, even though that would mean to leave hi naked.

Answer: That is not said for you to simply give your coat to him who wants to take it away from you. But that is said for him who want to file a suit to you in a justice court, and that means mercilessness and processes which harm the soul. In such a case you must despise the bodily things in exchange for the salvation of your soul. This is for he says: "What will the man benefit if he gained the whole world but he has lost his soul?" (Mt. 10: 26).

[1110] If we do good to the thieves who broke into our house, we will get proud, because of not having us reached the high level of commiserating with the thieves for the passion they suffer of. But we must neither harm them, so that us to avoid adding sins to the sins already had by us.

[1111] Let's thank God for the fact that He hasn't allowed the thieves to rob us according to our sins.

670. Question: But there are some people experienced in processes and they do not get harmed as them who are inexperienced. Won't that be good if the last ones entrust the first ones to represent them in court?

Answer: Even thought those ones are experienced in court, we still will be the cause of their souly harm. And by comparing the two evils, this one is not smaller. This is because, if ourselves go to court that will harm our soul. But if those ones are harmed like we are, we will ourselves be the cause of their harm, and they harm turns back to us and we will suffer the same harm. This is because it was written: "The evil must come, but, woe to him whom the evil come through" (Lk. 17: 1). And if, instead of being content for being delivered from such troubles, somebody strive to hurt his enemies and make them suffer, this thing will be worse than anything and it will anger God Who asked us not to payback the evil with evil (Rom. 12: 17); and "forgive and you will be forgiven" (Mt. 6: 14; Lk. 6: 37).

671. Question: When there is the need for one to testify about a real killer, should lie to escape that killer from death?

Answer: If you do not lie for anything, you won't lie for that either. This is for it was written: "Do not have mercy on the poor at the judgment" (Exod. 23: 3). This is for, if it is not the will of God, that killer won't die. And if somebody lies regarding other things too, and if he wants to lie in this case as well, let him do as he used to. This is for it was written: "he who does the sin he does lawlessness too" (1 Jn. 3: 4). I do not want to decide these things. And if you do not need to testify, you need not to say anything. We have regarding this, the saying: "Telling I don't know, it won't throw anybody in jail".

762. (V. 672-673). Question: If somebody has rich debtors, can he ask for interests? And if the debtors are poor, can be ask them to pay back the money he lent them?

Answer: It was written about the righteous one that "he didn't give his silver by asking for interest" (Ps. 14: 5[1112]). And this means that we can ask back the sum of money lent by us. But if some people cannot pay us back the money that they owe to us, about those ones was written: "If your brother is in need, do not burden him with your asks" (Sirach 31: 31[1113]).

673. (V. 674) Question: If my debtor is poor but I too am poor, won't I commit sin asking him for my money because I need that money?

Answer: You won't sin, but, if possible, let one not trouble his brother who is unable to pay him back.

674. (V. 675). Question: When I suffer a loss and my heart doesn't get sad. My thought tells me: "This is callousness; you should get sad, firstly, and then you to thank". Does my thought tall me right?[1114]

Answer: We must not get sad at all for anything belonging to this world, but only for our sins[1115].

[1112] In KJB we have: Ps. 15: 5: "He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved."; in ROB we have: "Ps. 14: 5: "His silver he didn't give it by asking for interest, and he didn't take gifts against the innocent. He who does these, he won't ever wobble." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1113] In the KJB this book, called *The Wisdom of Joshua the Son of Sirach (The Ecclesiastes)* is not present, but it is given in the ROB. The interested reader can find this book in an English translation on www.academia.edu, together with the other thirteen books not given in the KJB, under the title: *Bible Missing Texts*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1114] Not getting sad for our loss means making no effort for overcoming a hardship caused to you by that loss, and that means no longer living the weakness of the human. Is that state good? – this is the question asked by that disciple.

[1115] The Oldman answered by showing that the capacity of getting sad it is better us to preserve it, but only regarding our sins. Thus, you can be both strong and human. Christ Himself was sad on occasions. He was sad especially because of the death He was to suffer of our sins which he impropriated, and because of the fact that he ought to die in order Him to escape us from a false life. In the answer given to the following question, the Oldman admitted also our sadness for other people. But that is another kind of sadness that that for our own sins. Jesus was sad mostly for us. Or, for he willingly took our human, the whole His sadness was for us, for others.

675. (V. 676). Question: What does it mean: "Rejoicing together with them who rejoice, and crying together with them who cry" (Rom. 12: 14)?

Answer: Rejoicing together with them who rejoice themselves, it means rejoicing together with them who have achieved that virtue according to God and together with them who rejoice for their hope for the future goods. And crying together with them who cry, it means suffering together with them who have sins, when they repent for their sins.

676. (V. 677). Question: If a friend of mine loses a child or some goods, and he gets sad, should I be sad together with him, as a friend of his?

Answer: You should get sad in those things, together with him, lest him, because of too much sadness, him to cogitate something damaging to his soul, because of not being him able to endure that loss with gratitude.

677. (V. 678). Question: Because it was written: "Blessed are the peacemakers (Mt. 5: 9), would it be good for us to strive for the peace of everybody?

Answer: It will be better if we give peace to our own heart[1116]. This should be done by everybody and blessed is him who does that. And reconciling them who fight one another, it doesn't belong to everyone's power, but only to them who can do that without getting harmed. And the weak one must rejoice of the peace of everybody, but he mustn't mediate for the peace of everybody, except for the peace of them who are loved by him according to God. And he can do that only when no harm comes out of that upon his soul.

[1116] You will have done peace within your heart, if you are no longer reproached by the evils done by you, and if you search for getting reconciled with God and with your fellow humans; and if you no longer feel yourself disturbed by anybody and if you do not want to disturb anybody else; and especially if you are no longer disturbed by any passions of yours.

678. (V. 679). Question: When I do something according to God and I am despised by people, I get sad because I have offended them.

Answer: If you are unjustly despised, you mustn't get sad. That is for the devil envies the good and he moves these thing sin order him impede the good. But in the end the devil will be stopped and God will show the glory of the good thing. But if, because of your mistake, you are rightly despised, it will be you who caused shame to yourself. But if you repent for your mistake, that shame will be turned towards joy.

679. (V. 680). Question: Some other loving-of Christ layman, because of enduring evil form somebody, he told the Oldman about that.

Answer: You do him good.

680 (V. 681). Question: By doing these things, he suffered again evil from that one, and he told to the Oldman about that, saying: Lo, I am doing him good, but he doesn't' stop to do me evil.

Answer: You aren't doing good to him, but to yourself. This is for the Lord said: "Do good to your enemies and pray for them who trouble you" (Lk. 6: 27-28). Each one will take according to his deed (Ps. 61: 11[1117])[1118].

681. (V. 682). Question: Another loving-of Christ laymen, who was hosting Fathers, he asked the same Oldman: What should I do, because I am always troubled, because some of the

[1117] In KJG we have: Ps. 62: 11-12: "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God. // Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work."; in ROB we have: Ps. 61: 11: "God spoke once, I hear this two things: that the power belong to God and Yours, Lord, it is the mercy; for You rewards each one according to his deeds." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1118] You will all the more grow up as you do not receive thanks for recipient of the good done by you. You are twofold victorious: by being a good and by suffering the evil for the good you have done.

Fathers come and I have not the things I need for accommodating them?

Answer: This is a devilish thought. It will suffice to the Fathers the things you have, according to the saying: "Be content with the things you have" (Hebr. 13: 15). And God will make them content by letting them know. This is because, if one complains about the absence of these things, he cannot host anymore, but he prays for nobody to come to visit him. And when you have something that you can place on the table before them, do not do that with avarice, even though you have hosted them previously for thousands of time, their heart will remain, because of being they heralded, discontent, and you can do that only in case you need that for a bigger need, maybe for giving that to some ill people or to some more important persons. This is for one must do everything with right-reckoning. And if you smut go somewhere else, you will not expect to find there a great resting (feast). And do not get disturbed if you do not find that. This is because, if you expect that and you do not find it, you will gossip and the gossiping is the death of the soul. But be grateful in everything. This is for that is the spiritual and beneficial to the soul food and hosting (resting)[1119].

682. (V. 683). Question: But what should I do if the didn't allow me to enter at all and I was tired due to traveling and I need food?

Answer: Think at Who is the One taking care of everyone and Who feeds all the people. That is God. So, if God wanted to feed you, He would urge those to receive you. And if they didn't receive you, it would be obvious that God didn't' want that and they are not guilty for not receiving you. This is for all the things are done towards the proving and the salvation of the man, in order the man to endure that and to condemn on himself in everything as unworthy.

[1119] Towards what gentle relationships these advices lead, and not only externally.

683. (V. 684). Question: Another loving-of Christ layman askes the same Oldman John: I am filled with fear by a thought telling me: The devil makes you to commit sins, even despite you don't want that, for you have made yourself debtor to the devil[1120].

Answer: Do not reckon that the devil has power against somebody. If that had bene the case, the cause of the sin wouldn't have been due to our will, but it would have been due to the force of him who would have received such a power. Like the man is not dragged forcedly to his salvation, likewise he is not dragged forcedly to any sin. Did the devil deceive Eva with his power, not with his advice? There cannot be seen the power anywhere. If the devil had been given the power nobody would have dared to run away from him. So, we are like a fee man who enslaved himself to somebody by his own will, but at a certain time he comes to his senses and he repents. But he that slave doesn't run to somebody who is more powerful that his current master, he cannot gain back his freedom. And if he does that, the current master know that he is not really that slave's master and he won't dare to do any harm to the slave, because he fears that master how is more powerful than he is. Therefore, it is proven that the devil has no power over the man. So, you too should tall to your thought: "Yes, I owe him, but I have run to Him Who ca set me free and He told me: "Come to me all of you who are tired and burdened and I will rest you" (Mt. 11: 28). "And I must always take vigil in order I not to fall again in his hands". And if your thought tells you again: "If he cannot force you to commit sin, behold that since now you no longer will be submitted to the sin" and your thought burden you by telling you that, you will answer your thought like this: "If you tell me that from now on, I will not commit sins, I won't believe you until I will enter the stronghold. This is because, even if one traveled the entire road, and only a mile remained, and he fell there, he wound; t benefit anything for that trip. This is because he still is outside the stronghold". So, let's throw our helplessness in front of God and He will stop the plots done against you, through the prayers of the saints. Amen.

[1120] Reckoning that you have received something from the devil. So that you must pay the devil back by committing a sin, even though you do not want to sin. It is here a discouraging fatalism.

684. (V. 685). Question: The locusts destroy my field. If I chase thema way, my neighbors will get angry on me. If I allow them stay, I will loss the harvest. What should I do?

Answer: Take sanctified water and spread your crops with it and if you can banish the locusts away or to destroy them peacefully and without strifing with anybody, that won't be a sin. And if that gives birth to strife, let that thing in the acre of God towards the benefit of your soul. And anything happens, it happened by the will of God.

685. (V. 686(. Question): But, Master, if we must banish the anger of God in all things, won't we anger God by doing that?

Answer: They who are consummate they do not banish away the anger of God. But they fully hope in God. But because we still are bodily and we need the earthly tings, we banish it while condemning ourselves as sinners. And that's why we do that with prayer and by singing of psalms, and praying God to forgive us[1121] and striving ourselves to thank God from now on. This is for the evils won't stop afflicting us without us repenting and being merciful. This is for he says: "Blessed are the merciful, for they will find mercy" (Mt. 5: 7). And you must not say: "Why God Who sends His anger towards our correction, He lets them who don't repent to banish His anger away?". This is for God sends his anger as a menace, in order us to repent. But God allows us to banish His anger away from us for He has long-patience and He waits for us to turn ourselves towards Him. But if we persist in the same evil deeds even after we have banished away His anger, we will fall into giver evils[1122]. And so

[1121] God allows the hardships to come upon us for He wants to turn us from evil. But we try to get rid of hardships, and we do that by praying and by repenting. And that helps our urge towards correction, towards turning ourselves to God. Actually, God Himself will deviate the hardships from us, for He knows also that out of the fruits of our field, helped by Him, we will give away alms. If all the things belong to God, they don't belong only to us but they belong to other people as well. This is for God gives the material good for everyone. God doesn't separate Himself for each of us. But the act of communication from ones to others there must be activated the love and the mercy among us, and not our pride.

[1122] The stubbornness into evil with all the hardships coming upon us, it will increase the evil from within us, because of making our being ever more callous. And this is the biggest evil.

is fulfilled with us the prophetical word: "I treated Babylon but it didn't heal" (Jer. 28: 9). And he cannot expect something else but "the eternal torments and the outer darkness[1123] and that worm spitting venom and the gnashing of teeth" (Mt. 8: 12; Mk. 9: 49).

683. (V. 687). Question: Another loving-of Christ layman asked: I want to press in my winepress some grapes for a Jew. Will that be a sin?

Answer: If God giving rain over your field, He wouldn't allow the rain falling upon the Jews field, neither you will press his wine. But if the love of God reaches everyone, and if God sends rain over righteous and over unrighteous, why would we want to be inhuman and not rather merciful, as God Himself says: "Be merciful as your Father form heaven merciful is" (Lk. 6: 36)?

687. V. 688). Question: If somebody entrusts me with a thing, and he asks me not to tell anybody about that, and some other man swears me to tell him about that, why will I do? If I talk about that, I will upset him who has entrusted me with that thing. If I don't talk about that, I will upset him who swears; and I fear his oath.

Answer: If he asks for that by swearing, he will be the one bearing that sin[1124]. So, you must not unveil the secret of your

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That will make us lose our habituation oof repenting and of getting softened, despite all the endures evils. This allows us to understand the eternal hell, as it will be said in continuation. Likewise, persevering in good means advancing into good, it means progressing into kindness, it means getting a softened and communicative heart.

[1123] The "eternal torment": you will be tormented in evilness, in pride, without having any chance to get rid of those by repentance. The "outer darkness": the extreme loneliness, outside any communication with the life coming to you out of the connection of love with other people and with God Who is the supreme Person-like water-spring. The "secreting-venom worm": the pride that secretes the venom of the tormenting stubbornness, and that chews you continuously. The "gnashing of teeth": of disgust, but also of void, of boredom, and of stubbornness.

[1124] One can see that back then it was the custom that one not only sworn upon himself, btu also upon another: "I swear you to tell me". And the sworn one feared that oath too. Not admitting that oath meant hiding something. Admitting that oath meant becoming trustless.

brother, by invoking the oath as reason. You tell that one: "If you entrusted me with something, would you like me to unveil that secret to somebody else? So, if you wouldn't like that, neither ask me to tell you the secrets of that brother. This is for it was said: "That what you do not like to be done to you, you to do not done that to your brother" (Thes. 4: 16); and again: "That what you want the people to do to you, you too do them the same" (Mt. 7: 12; Lk. 6: 31).

688. (V. 689). Question: Why should I think? That every man is righteous, or that I am more sinner than everyone? This is for I find it difficult to reckon that any man is righteous[1125]*.*

Reckon yourself the most sinner and the most unimportant of all people and you will have resting.

698. (V. 960). Question: When I talk to somebody about the "Lives of the Fathers" and about their "Answers" (they Apophthegmata: Paterikon), my heart cogitates big things. Tell me, how should I talk with humble cogitation? And whom should I tell those things to? And on what purpose?

Answer: When you talk about the "Lives of the Fathers" and about their "Answers", you must condemn on yourself, saying: "Woe to me because I am talking about the virtues of the Fathers and I haven't gained any of them. I haven't reached any progress and I am sitting on this chain talking to others' benefit. I wonder, it won't be fulfilled with me the saying of the Apostle: "You who teach others, don't you learn yourself" (Rom. 2: 21). And by telling these things to yourself, your heart will be burning and you fill be speaking humbly. But you must take heed at whom you are talking to. If you know that that person will benefit of your teaching, you will talk to him. If not, you won't need to speak. This is because it was written: "Blessed is

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Only him who gained a proven name as a man who didn't lie, only such a man could escape this requirement from others.

[1125] It is more difficult to reckon anyone righteous than to reckon that there is no man without sin but you are the most sinner among people. The Oldman approves the second thought, but the Oldman asked him, in the same time, not to occupy himself with the thought that everyone is righteous, so that him not to judge the people in any way.

him who talks to the ear of them who listen to him". It is good neither to give the holy things to the dogs nor to throw pearls before the pigs (Mt. 7: 6). May the Lord make you wise, brother, so that you won't lost the way of the humbleness.

690. (V. 691). Question: Two loving-of Christ laymen truly loves one another into the Lord and they were guides through live by the Fathers. One of them, in a discussion, he told a word about somebody else. The other brother, because of devil's kidnapping, he suspected that that brother was referring to him, and he got very upset. The first one, assured him that he wasn't speaking about him, but he didn't let himself persuaded. And from here, because of occurring between them a little strife, they both came to the Fathers and told about that thing to the same Oldman who answered them.

Answer: I am telling you all the truth in front of God, as to ones who are of the same soul. Both of you owe to prostrate in front of God[1126]. But not with indifference, but with the whole your heart, so that God will forgive you with the prayers of your Fathers. You, because of reckoning yourself as defamed, you didn't endure the defamation, so that you to say: "I have mistaken and I am wholly a sin, because my brother got upset because of me". And you, the another, because before taking you hadn't specified that you were not talking about him and that you have nothing to say against him, until your very death. On the other hand, you too haven't patience within you. Still, you are not guilty. But we are the cause of the evils because of not making prayers[1127]. This is because, if we prayed for you, you would be protected against the cunning one who sown the tares between you, in order to tempt you. This is for we usually ask this for you: you to be protected. Fear the judgment of God,

[1126] "Prostration" means in Greek both repentance and the bowing down of the man before God and before his fellow humans. Between these two there is a connection. You bow down before somebody, asking for his forgiveness because of some mistake you have done.

[1127] These deep and subtle intertwinings among people cannot be unveiled but into an accentuated spiritual life. They show us that their source cannot be but a supreme intertwining of interpersonal order: the Holy Trinity, which the Three Persons aren't into a motionless uniformity, but in an alive, delicate, and extremely subtle and complex communication. Only this can lead the mankind to the peak of the gentlest relationships. "I am guilty for you because of not praying for you". That goes all the way to a substitution of selves but without merging those selves.

so that the people, not to be offended by you, saying: “Behold that the sons of the Fathers have no patience, but they start one against another”. And if you feel shame to prostrate to one another with a full heart, behold that we will do that for you. This is for this shame touches us. May the Lord forgive you and protect you against the evil one. And may the Lord quickly crush the evil one under your feet. Be you of one soul and of one thinking and of one faith into the Lord. May the Lor4d support you so that you to remain steadfastly into His fear. Amen.

691. (V. 692). Question: Another loving-of Christ layman who was hosting the Fathers, he sent a letter to the same Oldman asking him if it will be useful to him to totally reject the world and to come to the monastic life. And the Oldman wrote him back that the most consummate life is the life into withdrawal, that one reckoned that as a commandment and he got very sad and he thought not to ask the Fathers about anything anymore. The Oldman knew that in his ghost and he asked to be written to that brother the following things:

Answer: Before all, we embrace your love into the Lord. And we urge you to quickly reject your sadness thought and to read and to joyfully understand into the fear of God the things wrote to you in the previous epistle. This is because I didn’t write to you anything as a commandment, because of knowing the word of the Apostle that sys: “I do not mean to set you a trap” (1 Cor. 7: 25). But I showed you what individual benefit has each of the things done by us. It was that what everybody understood the Lord like, for after He says in the Gospels that what is written into the Law: “You shall not commit adultery, you shall not kill etc.” (Mt. 19: 18), and he who was asked he answered: “I have been keeping all of these, what I need more”, the Lord talked to him about consummation: “If you want to be consummate, sell your wealth” and the other things as you know.

But the hater of the good always tries to impede all the good things. This is because, by seeing the benefit of the thing wrote to you by me, even before you knowing the meaning of the written things, the hater of the good disturbed a little your thought. It is amazing what that one cover the man’s mind like,

by kidnapping the man's thought, in order the man not to benefit at all. And that one doesn't allow the man to ask on himself why is himself getting upset, and to tell to himself: "Why are you sad, my soul? And why do you trouble me? Hope in God, for I will confess myself to Him" and the other things (Ps. 41: 6[1128]). He does that in order to prove to the man that, if the written things were from holy people, they would bring him help and not disturbance and temptation. But him who is awake in his mind he can see that even the Apostles got disturbed through faithlessness, when they saw their Master and Savior Christ. This is for This One told them: "Why are you troubled? And what the doubts climb into your hearts for?" (Lk. 24: 30). And the peace immediately followed His words. Us too, if we read the written things into the peace of our heart, we would find out that we are not compelled to produce as it is written, a hundred out of one, or sixty, or at least thirty, as the third one (Mt. 13: 8). We would find out that the written things are all of them beneficial to us. This is because, by not being us able to fulfill that what is consummate, we strive in the present time because we only fulfill the deed of the hosting, in order us not to get haughty in our thought that we do some big thing, by seeing that we haven't reached to do that what is consummate. But not in order to reject the things you are doing now, I wrote the things comprised in the previous epistle, but in order you to come to what is bigger or, by remaining into that what you are, I to make you use for that the humbling into thought. Do not wander yourself about temptations either. This is for we have been commanded: "Rejoice when you reach into many sorts of temptations" (Jas. 1: 2). One among the Holy Fathers was asked once about a certain brother: "What is this, Abba, that every time I want to go to bed and I tire up myself by praying, and I seal myself[1129], in that night I dream fornication thoughts. And if I do not pray neither seal myself, I won't dream". And the Oldman answered him, saying: "This is done by the devils, out of their cunningness, in order to make you renounce to prayer and to sealing. This is for the devils know that out of prayer and sealing there comes help to the man". You too, if you ask the

[1128] In KJB we have: Ps. 42: 5: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me?"; in ROB we have" Ps. 41: 6: "What are you sad for, my soul, and what are you trouble me for?" (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1129] The devil wanted to sow doubt, through sadness, also in the holiness of the Oldman who answered that question.

Fathers and for a short while you are troubled by the devils for the words of the Fathers, do not avoid asking the Fathers back about their words told to you. The Fathers do not command anything harming or difficult. This is for the Fathers are the disciples of Him Who said: "My yoke is gentle and my burden is light" (Mt. 11: 30). And in the end, we are going to find out the fruit of their benefit. And then we are going to shout out, together with the Psalmist: "You have turned my pain into joy" (Ps. 29: 11[1130]).

692. (V. 693). Question: Another loving-of Christ layman asked the same Oldman: I happen to me, when I talk to someone, that I get suddenly scattered, so that it seems to me that I am outside myself and I forget about that what I am speaking; my mind isn't driven towards something else, but it gets out of itself. What is this, Father? For I am very troubled.

Answer: This is a devilish war, one that wants to shame up a man in front of his interlocutors. But if you let your interlocutors openly know about that, by telling them: "Forgive me, because the devil has scattered me", that war will cease and the shame will be turned over the devil himself. And then you will talk with watchfulness. And that what has happened will be reckoned as nothing. But he who doesn't do like that, he will cause much shame to himself[1131]. But the remembrance of the name of God will stop all the evils, and it will strengthen our helplessness. Amen[1132].

693. (V. 694). Question: A loving-of Christ layman, who was very restrained and very careful regarding his soul, he sent to be asked the same Oldman: Is it beneficial to somebody to do

[1130] In KJB we have: Ps. 30: 11: "Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness;"; in ROB we have: Ps. 29: 11: "You have changed my weeping into joy, You have broken apart my sackcloth and You have girdled me with gladness." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1131] In the Volos Edition: with the sign of the cross.

[1132] So, you can talk to others while you are thinking at God. And thinking at God will keep you awake in the things discussed by you with other people. This happened when you talk about serious things, while you are full of responsibility in front of God.

that what it seems him as good, or should he ask the Fathers in the first place?

Answer: If somebody reckoned by himself that a thing is good, and he doesn't ask the Fathers, he will be outside the law and he will have not worked according to the law. And he who does something after asking the Father about it, he fulfills the law and the prophets. This is for asking is the sign of the humbleness. And one who asks is a follower to Christ Who humbled Himself all the way to make Himself a servant (Phil. 2: 6). And the man who has no adviser is a cause of war to himself. This is for he says: "Do everything with counsel" (Ps. 72: 23[1133]). And John Colovos says: "If you see somebody younger ascending to heavens, catch him by his legs and throw him down" (Apophtegmes de la série anonyme su manuscrit Coislin 126, partially published in *Revue d'Orient chrétien*, 1907-1913, p. 165, no. 111). So, it is more useful one to humbly ask somebody than one to do whatever he wants. This is for, actually God is the One Who puts into the mouth of the asked one what he should answer, for the humbleness of the heart and for the righteousness of him who asks the questions[1134].

694. Question: If I sat together with the Fathers and they talk about faith and they resist to someone among those who doesn't cogitate rightly, should I too resist together with the Fathers, or not? This is for my thought tells me: "If you were silent, you would betray the faith". And if there took place a simple discussion about the dogma, should I tell the things I know about that, or should I keep my silence? And if I were asked, what should I do?

[1133] In KJB we have: Ps. 73: 24: "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."; in ROB we have: Ps. 72: 23: "You have grabbed me by my right hand. With Your advice You have advised me and with glory You have received me." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1134] Itself the experience proves us that when somebody humbles himself by asking us for an advice, there is wakened up within us the responsibility for forcing ourselves to cogitate at the best answer we could give him. The openness of that one's hear makes us too to open your heart to him. And in this real encounter between the two persons, through the openness of their hearts, there will be felt and transparent the presence of God. This is for we have surpassed on ourselves and on one another, in front of a forum that is superior to us.

Answer: Do not allow yourself even to be attracted into disputed on the faith. This is for God doesn't ask you for that. But you must believe rightly, as you have received from the Holy Church and at your Baptism and you must fulfill God's commandments. You must keep those and you will be saved. You must not talk about dogmas. This is because of being the dogmas above you. But you must pray God for your sins. Let your mind be occupied with these things. But take heed at not yourself in order you not to condemn them who talk about dogmas. This is because you do not know whether they speak rightly or wrongly, and how God judged that what they say. And if you are asked about something; you will answer: "These things exceed my power. Forgive me, Holy Fathers".

695. (V. 696). Question: But if in that dispute the heretic surrounded the rightly-believer by words, wouldn't that be I to come to help him, the best I could, lest him to be defeated so that he would wobble in his faith?

Answer: If you start to speak in front of God and of the people, that is like a teaching. But if somebody starts teaching someone while not having the needed power, his word will be unconvincing and unfruitful. So, if you do not bring any benefit, it will be useless for you to speak[1135]. But if you want to help at any costs, you will talk to God within your heart, for He know the hidden things and He can do more than we ask Him for, and Hew will do His will with them who are in that dispute, and you will find humbleness out of that thing. Suppose that somebody throws forcedly an innocent man into jail, unjustly, but somebody else who have seen that what has happened, and because he cannot resist that thing to happen or because of not being able to change that what has been done, and he will secretly go and inform a more powerful man and that powerful man will liberate him who has been jailed abusively; he who has abusively thrown that man into jail will get disturbed, but he didn't know who announced that man who is more powerful than he is. It is likewise here. Let's run to God into faith and for our brothers into the prayer of the heart. And Him Who has

[1135] Any discussion about God it is like a teaching to the dialogue partner. But if you do not have power to teach others and to convince them, do not talk to them.

sworn into Himself that "He wants all the people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the life" (1 Tim. 2: 4), He will do with them as He wills.

696. (V. 697). Question: Must I not even examine the established things in order I to know them when I hear an opposition?

Answer: Do not study anything that God doesn't ask from you. Neither utter dangerous words, but be content with confessing the right-faith and do not search for anything more.

697. (V. 698). Question: If the discussion is about texts form the Scripture, will I keep my silence, or will I talk? And if there happened that they were in doubt regarding something, will it be good I to speak up, or not?

Answer: The silence if better. But if the doubt about something and you know that thing, in order you to remove the doubt, you will tell, humbly, that what you know. But if you do not know that thing, do not say anything out of your cogitation. This is because that is insanity.

698. (V. 699). Question: If the discussion is about things which don't harm the soul, will I keep my silence, or will I talk?

Answer: It is not good to speak before you being asked for speaking. And if you are asked for speaking, you will tell that what you know, with humbleness and with fear of God, neither getting haughty of your word will be accepted, nor getting sad if you word won't be accepted. This is for this is the way of God. And in order you not to give the impression of being a taciturn, you will tell from yourself that what you know, by using a few words, and you will be delivered of the much-speaking and of the inappropriate glory.

699. (V. 700). If somebody asked me for I to give Nestorius and the heretics who follow him, to anathema, should I do that or not?

Answer: It is obvious that Nestorius and they who follow him are heretics and they are under anathema. But you must not hurry up in giving somebody to anathema, regardless who he will be. This if for he who reckons himself a sinner he must cry for his sins and nothing more. But you neither should judge them who give somebody to anathema. This is for each one must examine on himself (1 Cor. 11: 28).

700. (V. 701). But if somebody reckoned that I too cogitate as he does, what should I tell him?

Answer: Tell him: "Although it is obvious that those ones are worthy of anathema, I am more sinner than any man; and I fear let by judging another I to condemn myself. This is because even if I gave satan to anathema, because I do his deeds, I will give myself to anathema. This is for our Lord said: "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments" (Jn. 14: 15). And the Apostle says: "If somebody doesn't love the Lord, let him be anathema" (1 Cor. 16: 22). So, he who doesn't fulfill the Lord's commandments, he doesn't love Him. And he who doesn't love Him, he is under anathema. So, how could such a man anathemize another man?"[1136].

Tell him these things and if he insisted in the same request, you would put, for his conscience, the anathema on the heretic.

[1136] This is a tight cogitating; he who reckon himself as a sinner – and who could not to – he must reckon himself as being under anathema, or separated from God. But he who reckons that he is separated from God, how will him be able to declare another as separated from God and how could him judge that one for his separation, as long as himself is separated too? By that he will judge himself. Of, he claims by doing that that he would be united with the Lord, and he reckons another as worse than he is. But he hasn't the right to do that. But the bishops gather din synod they can put anathema on heretics. This is for they do not to that as particular person, but the Church is doing it through them.

701. (V. 702). Question: But if I didn't know if somebody is heretic or not, would I put anathema as I was requested to, or not?

Answer: Tell him: "Brother, I do not know what does think him whom you are telling me about. And putting anathema on somebody whom I do not know, it seems to me as condemning on myself. I am telling you this: I do not know any other faith except that of the 318 Holy Fathers. And he who cogitate a different faith than this, he has thrown himself under anathema".

702. (V. 703). Question: If a persecution tarted, why should I do? Should I stay or should I live?

Answer: Ask your spiritual Fathers and do whatever they will tell you to do. Do not follow your own judgment, in order you not to endanger yourself because of your nescience.

703. (V. 704). Question: And if I couldn't meet the Fathers I trust to ask about that, at the moment of that need, why should I do? Should I stay in order I not to seem that I betrayed the faith, or should I run away because of fearing my defeat?

Answer: Stay at prayer and pray with the whole your heart to the Loving-of-people God, telling Him: "Master, have mercy on me for Your kindness, and do not let me deviate from Your will, neither surrender me to this present trial towards my perdition". And do this for three times, like the Savior did, at the time He was surrendered. And after that, if you see yourself full of assertiveness for staying and for enduring - as strengthened by the grace of God – all the torments coming to you up to your death, you will stay. But if you see the fear within your heart, you will leave and you won't reckon that by doing that you will have betrayed the faith. This is for God doesn't ask somebody that what exceeds that somebody's power. And if you stayed while having the fear within yourself, it could happen that, because of not being you able to endure the coming troubles and torments, you could betray the truth and so you would attract to you the eternal punishment.

704. (V. 705). Question: If I reached unwillingly into a trial, what should I do?

Answer: Throw all your care upon the Loving-of-people God (1 Pt. 5: 7), saying: "Master, I haven't received this circumstance as one who has power, but unwillingly. That's why, for Your kindness, and for the prayers of Your saints, don't allow me to betray the holy faith".

705. (V. 706): What must I pray the Fathers like, for they to forgive my sins: "Forgive me!", or "Ask forgiveness for me!"?

Answer: When we pry them who went to the Lord, we must say: "Forgive me!". And when we ask for that, to them who still are among us, we must say: "Pray for us to be forgiven!"[1137].

706. (V. 706 b). Question: And when I pray the Master Himself, how must I say?

Answer: You must say: "Have mercy on me, Master, for Your Holy Martyrs and for the Holy Fathers, and forgive my sins for their mediations". This is for also the Prophet said: "For Abraham, Your servant" (Dan. 3: 35). And even the Lord Himself said: "I am going to defend this city for Me and for Davind, My servant" (4 Kings[1138] 19: 34; 20: 6)[1139].

[1137] The saints who left us are higher. They have crosses over the helplessness of the temptation. They are definitively strengthened into good. And by that, being them definitively and consummately near to the Lord and united with Him, we can ask for themselves to forgive us. But we must be aware of the fact that the Lord Himself forgives us through them. To them who still, are among us, we only ask them for praying for us, in order the Lord to rejoice of our humbleness and for our love which strengthen the communion among us. But we also can pray them for our forgiveness, for the mistakes we have done to them. But to the saints who passed away from us we pray for a general forgiveness.

[1138] In KJB we usually call this book as 2 Kings. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1139] Even when we pray God directly, it is appropriate us to mention also the prayers of the saints for us, namely to bring the saints too as our supporters, aiming to create an atmosphere of general love, and that will be pleasant to God, due to the fact of being shown that that love that spring out of Him it is lives by people in a real manner. The Lord doesn't stay isolated. Neither we must isolate from one another in our relationship with the Lord. This is the

707. Question: I a were among worldly people and they started speaking uselessly, should I stay or should I go?

Answer: If you didn't need to stay, you should go. If you needed to stay, you should move you mind to prayer, but not by condemning those people but by admitting your weakness.

708. Question: And if those were my friends, would you command me to change the subject for another more useful one?

Answer: If you know that they receive with pleasure the word of God, you will speak them out of the "Lives of the Saints" and you will direct the discussion upon the salvation of the soul.

709. Question: Will that be good if somebody calls the name of God during a dialogue?

Answer: One must call upon the name of God both during a dialogue as also before and after that dialogue, and every time and everywhere. This is for it was written; "Pray incessantly" (1 Thes. 5: 17). Thus the temptations will be banished.

710. Question: How can one pray incessantly?

Answer: When somebody is alone, he must sing psalms with his mouth[1140] as well and to pray out of his heart. But if

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Church; our permanent communion, one that increases as each of us progresses as person, that is actually a heareth of love. This is wanted by the Lord: Him to gather everybody together within Himself through their love among themselves, and Him to surrender them together with Himself through the same love of His and of all the ones gathered within Him, to the Father (Col. 1: 20; Eph. 1: 22; 1 Cor. 15: 28). That's why also Saint Apostle Paul prays for everybody (Eph. 1: 16). Has he ceased after his passing away to continue praying for us? Has he ceased showing his love for us by praying for us?

[1140] The sensing of psalms doesn't necessarily mean singing. But any uttered prayer received a rhythm, an internal harmony, that is like some sort of a singing. Only the hurried prayer doesn't have this order, but it is united with disorder. This elevated the words of the prayer above their limited meaning, and it produces the sentiment that God is a mystery uniting all

somebody is in the market place, or accompanied by some other people, he won't need to sing psalms with his mouth, but only in his thought. But he mut guard his eyes not to wander around and not to fall into the enemy's traps.

711. Question: When I pray or when I sing psalms and I do not feel the power of the said things[1141] because of the callousness of my heart, what do I benefit of that?

Answer: If you don't feel that power, the devils will still feel it, so that they will tremble with fear. So, do not cease the singing of psalms and the prayers. And, gradually, your callousness will be softened through God.

712. Question: When I am near to a church and they utter the threefold song, but I sit together with the Fathers and with the laymen, will I utter that too while sitting, or not?

Answer: If there are Fathers, you will do that what they do. And if there are laymen and you know that they will be offended, it is good you to spare their conscience and to do that what they do. But you can utter that song also while sitting together with them. And if something impeded you from uttering it, it will suffice you to think at it. And if there are no people superior to you in rank, you will stand up and utter that song. And it won't be wrong to urge them too to stand up. And they will do whatever they will want.

713. If I am alone and I hold in my hands some things which impede me from standing up, what will I do?

Answer: If you cannot stand up, to not be troubled about it. This is for all the things must be done with judgment and with right-reckoning.

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realities in an order. It produces the happy feeling of God's presence and help. Only after gathered into Christ the creation will get rid of disorder.

[1141] The "power" (δύναμη) of the words means in Grek also their meaning. Right the meaning conquers by having a certain power in itself. The words have power over him who utters them or hears them, when that one is aware of their meaning.

714. Question: If I visited some Fathers and they insisted for I to stay longer, but I had a business forcing me to leave, what should I do?

Answer: If they are able to discern the things as God wants to, you will tell them humbly: "Forgive me, but I have a task forcing me to leave". And you will do whatever they will tell you to do, without feeling your souls burdened, and believing that that will be beneficial to you. And if they are not like that, and if your business forces you to leave, you will cut that discussion off, and you will prostrate yourself fin front of them in order you to leave. And if they continue to insist, you will tell them: "Forgive me, but it is impossible to me to stay".

715. Question: If I sat at the table together with some of the Fathers and one of them blessed the food, should I say before start eating: "Bless!" and then I to wait until he blesses again? Or should I be satisfied with the first blessing? This is because of happening him to think at something else and so he could be late in blessing, and I get troubled because of that. Or, it is good that when I stretch my hand to grab some food, I to mark the food with the sign of the cross?

Answer: Once he blessed, it will be superfluous to bless the food again. Regarding the sign of the c ross, that too will be unnecessary. This is for in the blessing there was the sign of the cross as well. And why to elicit him who blessed the food, or to somebody else, the thought that you would not believe his blessing, and by that you to cause offense?

716. Question: If the Father visited by me asked me to bless the food placed on the table, should I accept that or not?

Answer: Do not accept that, but tell them: "I am not a priest, neither I have the monastic schism, but I am a layman and a sinner. And this is above my power. Forgive me, for the Lord".

717. Question: If all of us sitting at the table were laymen, what we should do, once not having anybody to bless the food?

Answer: It is good for the laymen too to bless God when they share themselves with food[1142]. This is for the food is being sanctifies by calling upon the name of God. But this blessing is not like the blessing of the clergy. But this blessing is a doxology and a calling upon the name of God. And it is due to everybody to call upon the name of God and they to extoll God. So, it will be good for the laymen also to do this, if they have not one who can bless the food.

718. Question: If they hesitated regarding who should be the fist to utter the blessing and each one refused to do the blessing himself, what should we do?

Answer: He who invited them to the table, he must ask whomever he wants, and the chosen one should do the blessing. And if nobody accepted to utter the blessing, in order thee not to occur a dispute, he who invited them to sit at the table should himself say: "For the prayer of the Holy Fathers, may the Lord be with us. Amen".

719. Question: You told me that it is good for the laymen too to call upon the name of God before they start eating, so that by calling upon the name of God the food to be sanctified. It is good for the mentioned verse uttered before the bread has been placed on the table?

Answer: It can be uttered that verse. But because somebody tell in prayer: "Bless the food place in front of us!", it is goo and appropriate to be the prayer told when the food have been already placed on the table.

[1142] In the note at Volos Edition: Or to say "Our Father" at lunch, and "The poor will eat" in the evening, or "For the prayer of our Fathers".

720. Question: If the Fathers asked me to judge some things but I didn't trust myself too much, what should I do? Shoulr I accept that, or should I reject it? And should I tell them that what seemed appropriate to me, or should I ask, previously, them who know better and then I would judge?

Answer: For the commandment of the Fathers you should accept and tell them who are sued: "I am going to judge according to what seems to me as right". And take heed to judge righteously and not to lean your heart towards any of those because of your passion, of because of your desire to be you pleasant to him, but you will tell that what seems to you as right. This is for God Who is the only One knowing the truth, He will judge your intention. And if you can ask also somebody who knows better than you, it won't be wrong if you do that too.

721. Question: If that thing needed an oath, should I ask them to swear, nor not?

Answer: Do not ever force anybody to swear. This is because God has forbidden us to swear. But you will tell them: "This thing requires you to take an oath. If you want to do that, it depends on you". But if you have been ordered by the state's authority to judge, you will be forced to ask the sued ones to take an oath. This is for you firstly must carefully establish the circumstances and then you to decide, by not taking in account anything else.

722. Question: If I were next to an older man, or next to a superior who was reading, and he mistook some words or accents, and I knew the correct variant, should I tell him or not?

Answer: If you know that he will listen to you with pleasure, you will tell him. And if not, you won't tell him anything. Take heed at yourself in order you not to be stolen into your thought by vain-glory. This is because of being more profitable to you if you have kept your silence, than to tell him out of your vain-glory.

723. Question: Another loving-of Christ layman asked the same Oldman: If some monk asked me to accompany him to do something that didn't seem to me as being according to the will of God, what should I do?

Answer: If that thing is not according to the will of God, you won't accompany him, but you will stay away from that thing and you will tell him the truth: "As far as I am concerned, this thing doesn't seem right to me". And if that thing is according to God and it doesn't harm your soul in any regard, you will accompany him for you will be rewarded. But if that thing harms you, you will stay away from that thing. This is for God doesn't ask you to do something hurtful to your soul.

724. Question: When I see somebody cursing or doing injustice to a monk, I get disturbed. Do I do rightly or wrongly?

Answer: Nothing that causes disturbance is good, but it is the work of the devil, even though it will be motivated as good. So, if you get disturbed, you won't tell anything, because otherwise you will disturb that one too. And this is because the evil cannot be abolished by evil[1143]. And if you do not allow yourself to be disturbed, tell that one gently: "Don't you fear the sin, by unjustly cursing on Abba (on the monk)? Don't you know that the schism (the monastic clothes) he wears, it belongs to God and God will get angry?". And by talking to him like that you will find yourself speaking according to the will of God. And powerful is God, so that God tames that man as He wills.

725. Question: Another loving-of Christ layman asked the same Oldman: I have a process in court with somebody for something. What do you command me to do? Should I ask for full justice from him or should I not search for that fulness but to end the process as soon as possible?

[1143] The irritation caused in the soul by a passion it extends like a flame within another's soul. Both the evil and the good have a contagious power within them. The good has the power for strengthening us and for making us masters over ourselves, while the evil has the power for weakening us and for disorganizing us. I must not allow myself to be disturbed by evil in order I not to transmit that evil to somebody else.

Answer: Strive, as much as you can, to be delivered as quickly as possible. This is for it is characteristic to the consummate men not to get disturbed when the temptations come. And the weak one, by postponing the reconcilement, he later comes to the sorrow. And because of having to blame on himself, he rather starts the blasphemy towards God and he loses his soul. And it is fulfilled with him the word: "What will benefit the man if he gained the whole world but he has lost his soul?" (Mt. 16: 20).

726. Question: Somebody owes me something and if I don't show a little indifferent, we won't reach the peace. What do you command me to do?

Answer: he who searches for the peace won't be deprived of the peace from God[1144]. This is for "he who is faithful in little, he will be faithful in much too" (LK. 6: 10); and "the merci overcomes the judgment" (Jas. 2: 13). So, if the man doesn't' despise the need for the things from the world, he won't reach the peace of Christ[1145]. And "He Who has started within you the good thing, He will finish it too, until the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1: 6)[1146]. And our prayer is this: May God give us the peace, in order us to consummate the thing of God[1147]. This

[1144] If you strive not to allow to be troubled yourself in the relationships with the people, you will have also from God power for maintaining yourself in the state of peace. That's why in the striving to remain undisturbed, you will be strengthened by thinking at God.

[1145] He who values the world's things to much, he who reckoned the need for the world's things too burdening, he will easily get disturbed when if the loses some of those things, or if he doesn't add something to that what he has. So, he doesn't have the peace that is given by Christ Who didn't look at the perishable thing of the world. The mercy on people had by Christ, a mercy that us too can have it from Him, that mercy makes us despising the juridical processes with the people for the world's things, for that mercy unveils us their relativity in comparison to the absolute value of the soul.

[1146] Christ helped us not to give too much importance to the world's things, out of mercy for people, in order to make the people kind by our kindness, and Christ will bring us to consummation on this line. We do the good for being us attracted by the perspective of our eschatological consummation. The eschatological perspective maintains within us the dynamism of the good and it increases the good within us.

[1147] In the Greek language the word εική has both the meaning as "prayer" and as "desire". The prayer is a desire too. As such, the prayer is directed towards the future and in last analysis the prayer is directed towards the eschatological future and towards the consummate

is what it was confessed also by the all-holy waiter of the whole Church[1148].

727. Question: Should I receive any stranger monk who comes at me, without inquiring the aspects related to him? And, if I receive him, hos should I let him go? And should I give him something before he leaves? This is for there are some of them who ask for that too.

Answer: It is written in Proverbs: "Do not introduce any man within your house" (Sirach[1149] 11: 13). So, when a stranger comes to visit you, you firstly pray God and then you will inquire the things related to that stranger: where he is from and where does he go. And if it seems to you that you should receive him, you will receive him and after feeding him you will let him go, by not giving him anything. This is because, if you want to do the good over your powers, you won't be able to do that for a long time.

728. Question: What do you advise me? I have trusted one and I accommodated him for a few days. But I need to go somewhere and I am ashamed to ask him leave, because he could be offended. Or, do I want to tell him go without a reason? What should I do?

Answer: Tell him serenely: "Abba, have you decided to leave now for another place?". And if he says: Yes!", you will tell him: "I too have an urgent business and I want to leave for solving it". And if he says: "No!", you will tell him: "And what do

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fulfillment of the man. Essentially, we ask God for salvation, and the salvation is the eternal happiness after the end of the time.

[1148] Volos Edition, at note: "Maybe by saying the waiter of the entire Church, the Father means the blessed Paul. This is for Apostle Paul said: "May the Lord Himself always give you peace" (2 Thes. 3: 16). Paul is a great waiter, for Christ entrusted him with the care of our souls, which he fulfills it in his epistles until the end of the world, when the Lord will come for the second time."

[1149] In the KJB this book, called *The Wisdom of Joshua the Son of Sirach (The Ecclesiastes)* is not present, but it is given in the ROB. The interested reader can find this book in an English translation on www.academia.edu, together with the other thirteen books not given in the KJB, under the title: *Bible Missing Texts*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

you advise me? Because I ought to leave for some place. And here is nobody to serve you". And so, he will leave in peace.

729. Question: Is it good to put the things from the monastic cell at their place, so that not one to be lost, or to let everything in the care of God?

Answer: It is good to put the things at their place and not only those things necessary for accommodating the guests, but also the things you use, after you have finished using them. This is for one must not give occasion for devil's temptation. But if it has happened due to forgetfulness or carelessness something has been lost, you won't be troubled, but you will blame yourself for carelessness and you will ask God for forgiveness. And you should not disregard the good thing of accommodating guests, but persevere as much as you can, but not over your power, and by doing everything with right-reckoning. And take care, from now on, not to give place to temptation.

730. Question: The Lord said: "Blessed are they who cry" (Mt. 5: 5). And the Apostle asks us to be close to one another (Rom. 12: 8). What good deeds having been done by somebody, he must cry; and what deeds he should do in order him to do them joyfully? And how it is possible for one to have both of them concomitantly: the crying and the joy?

Answer: The crying is that sadness according to God, which is born by repentance. Abd the signs of the repentance are: the fasting, the singing of psalms, the prayer, and the thinking at the words of God. And the joy is this: that gladness according to God which is shown in decency of words, and in the deed of them whom we meet with. So, let the heart have the crying, and let the face and the word have a decent gladness. Ad so one can have both of those concomitantly[1150].

[1150] Saint John Climacus spoke about "of-joy-maker crying" (*The Ladder*, chapter VII). Actually, the true repentance is united with the joy of the detachment from the sin. But this detachment is love for people. And it must be shown in the joy for another.

731. Question: If a friend of mine asked me to guarantee for him, should I do that or not?

Answer: The guarantee leads one to temptation. If you want to get rid of temptation, you won't guarantee for anybody, but you will tell him daringly, saying: "You know the love that I have for you, but I have commandment from the Fathers not to guarantee for somebody, because the Fathers know my weakness and they know in advance and better than I know that what will happen. So, I fear transgressing the commandment and sinning against God". Tell him these things and if he gets sad, you won't worry about that. And if you can get rid of that by invoking some reason, that will be good. This is for it could happen that that one not to accept anymore to ask you to guarantee for him, either because he respects you, or for some other reason. And if that was the case, you wouldn't be the cause and he wouldn't have any reason to get sad. But if you have reached to be a guarantor without realizing it, do not let yourself into a bigger indifference but tell to your thought: "What has been done, it has been done, but the Lord will deliver me and He will protect me against the things to come". And do not cease praying God for that and powerful is Him to work according to His mercy.

732. Question: I have a friend who is in danger of loosing the salvation of his soul, or his things. Do you command me to help him?

Answer: If he is your friend according to God and he is in danger to lose the salvation of his soul, or his things, you strive and help him according to your power, as long as that won't harm your soul. But if some harm comes to your soul out of that, stay away sand let that thing in the care of God and pray God for helping that neighbor of yours. And powerful is God to do with that one what is beneficial to him, as we should do too[1151].

[1151] Engaging yourself for your neighbor to the extent of endangering your life, it will have as effect not only his loss but your loss too. Your love wouldn't be beneficial to him if that was the case, and it would destroy you too to the extent of weakening your love. It is true that

733. Question: I have a friend whom we it has been found out about, that he is a heretic. Should I urge him to come to the right-faith, or not?

Answer: Teach him how to know the right-faith. But do not resist him, neither try to find out what he thinks, because there is the peril of getting yourself contaminated by that poison. And if he wants to benefit and to listen to the truth of the faith of God, bring him to the Holy Fathers who can help him and so you will be helping him according to God, while remaining yourself unharmed. But if after the second and the third advising he still doesn't accept the correction, you will avoid him, according to the Apostle's word (Tit. 3: 10). This is for God doesn't ask somebody to do that what is over his powers, as the Fathers say: "If you see somebody drowning into the river, do not stretch him your hand lest he will draw you in and you will die together with him But you give him your staff and if you can pull him out, it will be good, but if you cannot, let go your staff and save yourself" (Les sentences des Pères du désert, Nouvel recueil, Solesmes, 1976, no. 472).

734. Question: Someone among the Fathers who had some friends into the Lord and who was considered as faithful, he was found out as heretic in his cogitation. After finding that out, his friends left him. Later on, his friends found out that that one wanted to part with the Church, so that they thought at going to prostrate before him and pray him not to do that because of sadness, and to ask for that mistake to be reckoned as theirs. And they came and asked the Oldman about that.

Answer: The passion is passion. Do not show yourself as approving it. So, you won't prostrate before him as one who would have wronged him, but in order to ask him not to part with the Church.

Saint Paul said that he was able to be himself anathema for his nation (Rom. 9: 3). But he wouldn't have reached to be anathema, because he was not in danger of weakening his love for Christ, by being him consummately strengthened through that love.

735. Question: The same ones asked the same Oldman: If he parted with the Church and we met him, should we salute him or not?

Answer: Behave to him as you do with all the people of the same sort, and place him among them.

736. Question: If somebody enters the church during the Liturgy and exists the church before apolis, is that a sin?

Answer: The consummate and pleasant to God thing is that he who enters the church to listen to the Scriptures and to remain to Liturgy until the apolis form the end. He should not leave before apolis without having a blessed motif, because of that meaning despise to Liturgy. But when somebody is forced by a need, he will be forgiven. But neither then must he justify on himself. But he msut ask God for forgiveness, saying: "Master, forgive me because I haven't been able to keep the commandment".

737. Question: Should one talk while in church?

Answer: It is not absolutely necessary for one to talk within the house of God during the Holy Liturgy. But one must surrender himself to the prayer and he must listen, zealously, to the Holy Scriptures. This is for the Holy Scriptures talk about the salvation of our souls. And if there is a need for somebody to talk, let him talk briefly, because of the honor and the fear required by that time. Otherwise, his talking will be reckoned as a condemnable deed[1152].

738. Question: If I didn't want to talk, but some of the fathers started a dialogue with me, what should I do in order not

[1152] Talking during the Liturgy means getting scattered from praying. And in prayer, the participants to the Liturgy must be immersed, as a community of non-confounded persons, into the Lord in Three Persons.

to offend him with my silence because of seeming that I would despise him?

Answer: If those ones start the discussion, you will answer them briefly, and so you will show by that too that that thing is worthy to be despised.

739. Question: My thought tells me that I must not leave the house. But sometimes there are many Liturgies over the week. Should I attend the Liturgies or would be better for me to get busy within the house.

Answer: If you know that the goings out harm you because of encountering people, it will be beneficial to you not to leave the house even invoking the motif of attending the Liturgy, but only from time to time. This is for the quietude (the withdrawal) delivers one from many evils.

740. Question: But if I am forced to go out because of some need of mine or of the Fathers, won't I commit a grave sin by not attending the Liturgy?

Answer: If you are forced by some need or by some commandment of the Fathers, you will strive yourself to do that in the fear of God and do not be troubled because of being absent from the Liturgy. But go inside the house and remember your sins. But if you miss the Liturgy because of your idleness or indifference, it will be more useful to you to go to Liturgy and not to get scattered and to take heed.

741. Question: How is it better: to descend to the church at night, or to do my vigil in my house?

Answer: It is good to take vigil in your house. This is because in the church there occur many discussions.

742. Question: If I wanted to enter a house of martyrs or a church, for I to prostrate before the altar, or before the holy relics, or even for I to be imparted, would I commit a mistake[1153]?

Answer: Entering and prostrating isn't a mistake. But you should be imparted together with all the people[1154]. But guard yourself against entering carelessly to be imparted within altar. If you are called there by the priest, let him call you once and twice and if the priest insists, you will obey him. This is for he knows what he does and if there was a mistake it would be counted to him. But take heed at yourself, lest your vain-glory to sprout out. So, when you enter, you reckon yourself unworthy. This is for actually you are so.

743. Question: Somebody wanting to associate himself with another regarding a certain thing, he asked the Oldman whether that would be a good thing.

Answer: This is not beneficial either to the soul or to the body, but it will rather bring troubles and hardships. And because I am mindless and I do not know the Scripture, I am telling you here a worldly proverb: "You have an associate when you have the Lord". So, do as you wish. This is because we do not give commandment in order not to trouble somebody. Test yourself if you endure the trouble with pleasure or not, May the Lord be with you. Amen.

744. Question: My thought puts in front of me the fewness of the things I need and the fact that I cannot feed me and my household with them. And because of that I get sad. What does this mean?

[1153] The note from Volos Edition: The Canon 69 of the Ecumenical Synod VI, it forbids the layman to enter the holy altar. It seems that the saint allows the layman to enter the altar in order to worships the holy relics. But later on, parts of the relics started to be placed in the church's nave. But the priest who imparts the layman within altar he will commit a sin. Only the bishops and the priest representing the Hierarch Christ Who commits the sacrifice within altar, only they can be imparter within altar.

[1154] It is being affirmed here the need for the communion into Christ with all the believers. This is the purpose of the sacrifice of Christ: getting us out of our egotism and accomplishing as large as possible a communion. This removed the disorder from within creation.

Answer: This sadness is human. But if we trusted God, God would take care of us, as He wills. "Throw upon the Lord you care" (Ps. 54: 25[1155]) and He is powerful to take care of you and of your people, and Him to get you rid of sadness and trouble. And tell to the Lord: "Your will be done" (Mt. 6: 10) and the Lord won't allow you to get sad or troubled. Mat the Lord have mercy on you and his right hand to protect you. Amen.

745. Question: To a loving-of Christ advocate who was also friend of the monastery of the Fathers, Abba asked him an important thing which they needed quickly. This was for that advocate had the custom to fulfill their requests with the whole zeal, for God. But because of the work of the devil, it happened to him not to take care of the requested thing. And Abba got troubled and he asked the same Oldman what should he write to that advocate?

Answer: Write him these things: We know that we cause you trouble and we hinder you with this thing. But you haven't taken care of it and you have troubled us, because of doing nothing. Therefore, tell us plainly if we burden you, and we won't burden you anymore. Couldn't God fulfill this thing without you, through another advocate? Hurry up and tell us and Go will take care of us. And pray for us.

And that one hearing these things, he felt within his heart like a fire. And he put all his zeal for that thing, for their prayers. And he proceeded immediately. And their need was fulfilled. And he came after and prostrated before them and asked for forgiveness. This is the strength of the word starting from the power of the Holy Ghost. He fulfills everything in a short time. This is for, behold that his soul got woke up from idleness, that is the mother of all evils.

[1155] In KJB we have: Ps. 55: 22: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."; in ROB we have: Ps. 54: 25: "Throw towards the Lord your worry and He will feed you; He won't ever allow the righteous to wobble." (E. l. t.'s n.)

746. Question: A brother asked the same Oldman: What is the punishment for that one who despises a thing and that's why he loses or breaks that thing.

Answer: One like that is like a thief or like one who used a thing against the will of God; and he will; be submitted to the same punishment.

747. Question: But he who, because of hurrying, and not because of despising, he unwillingly loses a thing, him too will be condemned?

Answer: He must reproach that to himself and he must ask God for forgiveness, as one who was careless[1156].

748. Question: When one is in a dispute with another, on a thing of God, and he cannot find a solution, for how long must he insist?

If that quarrel bring harm to his soul, he mustn't insist in that. But if it doesn't harm hi soul, let him not get discouraged, neither to worry. Because otherwise he will be condemned for indifference. This is because it was said: "Cursed in him who does the things of the lord carelessly" (Jer. 31: 10). But he must also pray for God to help him to be delivered from that quarrel, as it is beneficial to him.

749. Question: When I do the count with somebody, and my thought whispers me to draw a small plus towards me and to pinch that one, what should I do?

Answer: Force yourself, on the contrary, to give him a small plus that won't burden you: fore instance, a penny, in

[1156] In this is being shown that the things are not form us bur they are gifts from God, and if we despise the things we will despise the bestower. And many of the things bear imprinted in them also the work of our fellow humans, so that we will also despise them and their work when we are careless with the things. Abba Dorotheos, the disciple of Abba Barsanuphius and of Abba John, he too spoke about the care one must have of things (*Word II. About Conscience*; *The Romanian Philokalia*, volume IX, p. 511).

order you to get rid of your ugly greediness. This is for him who strives to give to another a small plus, he will get far from the desire of taking, cunningly, more than he deserves. And from the very small things the man can advance to the big things, as also out of small passions will be born big passions. May the Lord make you wise into His fear.

750. If, after we did the count, I found out that I pinched the another, unwillingly, what should I do?

Answer: If you took more from him, you should give that back to him; on the contrary, if you took less from him, you should examine your thought and see if you wanted to take more from him. And if you found out that, you should give him even more, and if you didn't' want to take more from him, you should not give him more[1157], except if he is very poor. This is for this plus will make him sensitive. And in this case, you will give him back justly.

751. Is it a sin working on Sunday?

Answer: To them who work according to God, working on Sunday is not a sin. This is for the Apostle said: "Working day and night, in order not to burden somebody" (1 Thes. 2: 9). But to them who work on Sunday with contempt and with greediness and with the desire for ugly earning, it will be a sin to them. Although, it is good on the day of the Resurrection, on the lordly (imperial) feasts, and on the days of remembrance of the Apostles, us to stop working and to go to the churches. This is for this is a tradition from the Holy Apostles.

752. Question: Is it good one to give a blessed gift (eulogia) of the Fathers to somebody of a different faith, or to a poor[1158]?

[1157] If you took more from him, forcedly, you will give that back to him, in order you to heal yourself of the bite of your conscience. If you did that unwillingly, you can not to give that back in order not to stir up within him the suspicion that you have willingly taken advantage of him, and that will weaken his trust in you.

[1158] In the Volos Edition: Ευλογία of the Ftahers was called something received from some Father towards blessing and sanctification, for instance: something to eat, something to drink, or some clothing.

Answer: Do not hesitate to give a blessed gift to the poor, for that is a deed of giving alms. Neither to him of a different faith, for the blessed gift won't be harmed by him of another faith. And it could happen that due to the blessing from within that gift that one of another faith to come to the knowledge of the truth. This is for a certain Philemon, who were a player of flute, wanting to bring sacrifice in the place of the holy martyr Apollonius, he put on the martyr's coat and by the power of that thing he got converted and he became a martyr (Historia monachorum XIX: Festuguiere, Les Moines d'Orient IV/I, pp. 106-108)[1159].

753. Question: My cow is ill. It is forbidden to utter some incantations upon it?

Answer: The incantation is forbidden by God and one mustn't use it at all costs. This is for the transgression of Gods' commandment is towards the perdition of the soul. You should rather use for your cow the other means of the healing from the doctors. This is for this is not a sin. But you can also pour on it some holy water[1160].

754. Question: If my ill servant went to a witch without my permission, would that be reckoned as my sin?

Answer: That won't be your win, but his. But if you find out about that, you will rebuke him and urge him not to repeat that.

[1159] This Philemon wanted to save Apollonius, by claiming that he was actually Apollonius, so that he to bring sacrifices to the idols instead of Apollonius. But his love for Apollonius, and the power of Apollonius's coat that he put it on, they converted him to the Christian faith.

[1160] The incantation, the spell, the witchcraft consists of seeing the nature's powers or the man's powers as godlike, or rather devilish. This is because of invoking them is rather and order and a suggestion than prayer. Those are a practical idolatry. As such, they are contrary to the faith in God Who is above nature. But using the nature's powers as nature's powers place by God within nature, on the basis of knowing those powers as the doctors do, it is not a sin. But it is good to be called also upon the help from God that is added to the nature's powers.

755. Question: If going to a sorcerer is forbidden by God and if I see one going to see a sorcerer, should I tell him not to go?

Answer: If that one is one of your friends into Christ, you owe to tell him: "Brother, that harms you soul and you anger God who forbids you from doing that". And if he doesn't accept your advice, he will see. But if that one is a stranger to you, it won't concern you except whether he asks for your opinion about that. Then you owe to tall him the truth. This is because if you don't tell him the truth, you will be condemned. This is for Saul wanted to go and see a belly-speaker (ventriloquist) he asked his son Jonathan about that, and because his son didn't approve that, he was condemned by Saul (1 Kings[1161] 28). So, if somebody is under your mastery, you owe to advise him and to rebuke him when he transgresses your advice.

756. Question: If somebody buys or sells something, will that be a sin if he accepts a too high or a too law price?

Answer: When that doesn't happen unwillingly, but willingly, it won't be a sin to be given or to be taken the agreed price. But when somebody knows that he has taken more, he owes to give that back at his own initiative. By that he will do a good thing and he will content the another. But when one agrees with one who is under his mastery, he must think at whether that one could agree just because he was under his mastery. This is because, otherwise he will commit a sin. He must assure that one; "Brother, I won't mind if you do not accept my offer, but neither will I give you more. So, do whatever you live and as you wish".

757. Question: It is good as you teach the man to blame on himself in everything. But if somebody blamed me as I did something wrong to him, but I didn't know about me to be guilty of something, why should I do? This is because, If I wanted to condemn myself, I would find him getting strengthened in his upset against me, as my mistake done to him was real. And if, on

[1161] In the KJB this book is usually called as *1 Samuel* (E. l. t.'s n.)

the contrary, I wanted to defend myself by telling him that the thing is not so, I would find myself justifying me. And then, how could I take the defamation upon myself? Enlighten me, Father what should I do?

Answer: You should firstly rebuke on yourself within your heart and prostrate before that one, telling him: "Forgive me, for the Lord!". Then, with humbleness, and not as if you needed to justify yourself, but in order to heal him and in order to remove from him his suspicion regarding you, you tell him: "Father, I do not know myself as having wanted to upset you in something, or to having committed a mistake against you. Therefore, please not to be upset with me". And if he doesn't get convinced either in that way, then you will tell him: I have mistaken, forgive me!"[1162].

758. Question: But if a mistake against him and he hear that and so he gets upset, will it be good if I hide the truth in order to heal his upset? Or should I confess my mistake to him and ask him for forgiveness?

Answer: If you find out surely and if you know that that thing will come under scrutiny and it will be exposed, you will tell him the truth and you will ask him for forgiveness. This is because if you continue lying, you will make him even angrier. But if he hasn't found that out and if he won't inquire that thing, it won't be wrong if you keep your silence, in order you not to give rood to upset. This is for, when Samuel the Prophet was sent to anoint David as king, he prepared himself through the sacrifice he brought to God, fearing that Sameul could find out about that. And God told him: "Take a heifer with you and if Saul asked you: what are you going to do here?", you should tell him: "I have come to sacrifice to the Lord" (1[1163] Kings 16: 2-3). And so, he hid from the king a thing that could upset the kind,

[1162] You can more easily soften somebody's heart regarding you, by admitting yourself as being guilty, even though you aren't. And you will progress by doing that without being yourself guilty. And then you will add to that a good knowledge and the content of seeing that one having a softened heart. The kindness will finally overcome the evilness, as the communion too overcomes the egotistic loneliness.

[1163] In KJB this book is usually called as: *1 Samuel*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

and he said that thing only the other thing. So, you too should hide the upsetting thing. And in time it will pass.

759. Question: If it is proven that I haven't mistaken to somebody, but he has wronged me, how will I be able to blame myself? For instance, traveling somewhere, somebody who I have never known and without telling me anything, he hits me without reason, how could I blame myself for that?

Answer: You can tell to yourself: "I have been wrong choosing this road. This is because, if I didn't start walking on this road, I wouldn't meet this man and he wouldn't hit me". See that you could blame yourself, even if that was the case?

760. Question: If a do not limpidly see my sin and it seems to me unjust to blame myself, what should I do?

Answer: Say: "I have doubtlessly committed sin. But my sin is hidden from me, for now"[1164]. This still is a self-blaming.

761. Question: Another loving-of Christ layman was regularly coming to the monastery of the Fathers. But once he was late to come. And Abba asked him, jokingly: "Have you still found the way?", and he answered: "Abba, if you prayed for me, I wouldn't be late. But please don't tell this to the Oldman". And the Oldman heard about that and the answered him:

Answer: You have proven us as sleeping and not being able to do anything. But neither have your shown yourself more zealous, so that you to come and wake us up from our sleep[1165], lest you could know that from the disciples of the Lord. Th9is is for they have been engulfed by storm and they came to Him and woke Him up, telling Him: "Master, save us for we are

[1164] The memory doesn't retrieve all my deeds and all my thoughts. But they imprint my way of behaving. And sometimes, those ones come back into awareness out of an unconscious that I am bearing with me.
[1165] You haven't come to wake us up with your prayers while you were on the road.

perishing" (Lk. 8: 24; Mt. 8: 25). And he woke up and saved them.

762. Question: That one read the answer and wrote the same things to the Oldman. And the Oldman answered him:

Answer: Forgive me, for in dispute there is no humbleness[1166]. *And that one was pricked by that word and left from there taught.*

763. Question: A loving-of Christ asked the same Oldman: God created the man a free. But on some other occasion He says: "Without Me you cannot do anything" (Jn. 14: 6). How can be the freedom reconciled with the impossibility of doing something without God?

Answer: God created the man free in order the man to be able to lean himself towards good. But by leaning himself towards good by free will, the man is not capable of going the good without the good being fulfilled by the help from God. This is for it was written: "It is not from hiem who wants, neither it is from him who runs, but it is from God Who has mercy" (Rom. 9: 16). So, if the man leans his heart towards good, and if he calls God to his help, God, by taking heed at the man's good desire, God will bestow to the man power for that work. And so, both these meet together: the man's freedom and the power from God. This is for the good comes from God, but it is fulfilled by His saints. And so is God glorified in everyone and He glorifies them[1167].

[1166] He who contests the received teaching he proves to reckon himself as superior. So, he has not humbleness. But also, he who repeats his teaching, he proves himself as wanting to forcedly impose his advice to that one.

[1167] It is impossible to practically operate a separation between the man's contribution and God's contribution in the committed sin. The synergy is shown as a divine-human whole. One cannot tell who starts first and who gives more. The whole good deed belongs both to God and to the man. It is being told here that the man gives the leaning towards good, and God gives the power for fulfilling that good. But not without the man's contribution. This is because the man's freedom could lean towards evil as well, despite the man being helped by God. And the power which one does the good with, it doesn't belong only to God but it belongs to the man too. Right in the man's power there is the power of God too, and in using the power of God there is the man's effort as well. The good committed through the man it is

764. Question: I have kinships on the plan of the world[1168]*: some of them have important ranks and are locals; some others are of a modest state and they live far from here. And it happens that the last one come to visit us. If somebody asked me who they are, would I answer the truth or would I keep my silence? This is because, if I told the truth the relatives living locally would be upset about that and they would blush with shame.*

Answer: You should not make that thing public it not needed. Especially if that would elicit the upset of those ones living locally. Ene if you were asked, you should answer wisely, avoiding to unveil that thing. But if nobody got upset or bothered by that, you should not hide the truth, because otherwise you will show yourself as kidnapped by your vain-glory. And all of us are the creatures of God and nobody is more illustrious that another, except him who fulfills the will of God. Only the vain glory brings differences among people. But the conscience of the others must be protected, because of their weakness, when you don't need to make that thing public.

765. Question: I have a servant ill with a contagious disease (lepper). Should I keep that servant inside the house, or not?

Answer: You should not keep that servant inside your house, because not everybody can stand to be together with that servant. If they could stand that, that would be a rightly-believing thing. So, you must not trouble others for him. But you will surrender him to the house of the poor of those ill with such a disease and you will give him the food and the clothing and the bedding he needs, in order that house not to be burdened by anything.

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the product of the man imprinted by God, or of the deified man and of God descended on the level of the man and humanized and living the man's effort. The power of God is being glorified by the man's effort; the man's power is being glorified by being strengthened by the power of God.

[1168] It is here about blood-relatives, not spiritual.

766. Question: But whether by receiving the things he needs, as you commanded us, he wants to take his share out of the things brought from outside by other people too, should I let him do that or not?

Answer: You must neither urge him to do that, because that would be burdening to others, not must you impede him in order him not to protest or to blaspheme. But let him do as he wishes. And if the gift comes from you and he wants to take it, you will give that to him.

767. Question: My father according to the body talks to me about material things which bring no benefit to the soul and I am very troubled hearing him. But I neither want to tell him to shut up. What should I do?

Answer: It is good, if you can, to move your mind form the things he told you, either to prayer or to remembrance of the word of God and at the teaching of the Fathers. In this case, let him speak about whatever he wants. But if you cannot do that, you will strive for gently stop him from such a discussion and will urge him to approach a more useful theme, lets by tarrying in the previous discussion there to be in that discussion a trap of the devil. This is because the devil can set his trap unnoticeably, even by a word, only to find something listening to him with pleasure.

768. Question: When us harvesting the grapes see some people coming to take the leaves, will that be inappropriate us to forbid them form touching the grapes? And if I suspect them of having stolen grapes, should I check them physically? And if I find grapes at them, can I take those grapes from them in order to prevent others from doing the same? This is because my thought doubts about these things.

Answer: It won't be inappropriate if you do not allow them to touch the grapes. And if you suspect somebody of having grapes hidden on him, but you are not sure about that, do not check him at all costs, lets you will be ashamed of not finding anything on him. So, if you know that he has grapes hidden on

him but you forgive him, it will be good, and if you don't know surely, you will let him go without rebuking him.

769. Question: When I have done injustice and I want to repair that, my thought gets haughty as I would do something good. What should I tell my thought?

Answer: Tell to your thought: "He who does injustice, he will be punished. And he who repairs the injustice, he will escape his punishment and he will have praise". This is because something else if to do the good and something else is to do injustice. The doing of good serves God and it cause the eternal resting[1169]. And the injustice anger God and it causes the eternal punishment. This is what David said: "Deviate from evil and do the good" (Ps. 33: 13[1170]). But without God we cannot do any good[1171]. This is for He said: "Without Me you cannot do anything" (Jn. 15: 5). And the Apostle says: "What do you have and you haven't taken it?". And if you have taken it, why do you brag yourself as you haven't taken it?" (1 Cor. 4: 7). So, if even in working the good we must not get haughty in our thought, hos much less must we do that when we deviate from evil? This is because of being a big insanity reckoning as praise the fact of no longer sinning. Take heed at you, brother, lets the cunning devils will deceive you. And may the Lord make the devils powerless through the prayers of His saints. Amen.

770. Question: I am ill and the doctor asked me to wash myself up. Isn't that a sin? And should I show myself to the doctor?

[1169] The done good elicits your content each time you think at that good, namely for eternity, as Saint Gregory of Nyssa said too.

[1170] In KJB we have: Ps. 34: 14: "Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it."; in ROB we have: Ps. 33: 13: "Shun from evil and do good, search for the peace and follow it." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1171] That's why we cannot brag about anything good done by us. Even though we do not realize that God gave us the power to do that good, we better know that in order us not to take pride of the good done by us. This is for the pride, regardless how small, it will grow up and it will bring many evils to us and to others.

It hasn't been totally forbidden to the laymen to wash themselves up when needed. So, if somebody is ill and he needs to wash himself up, that won't be a sin. And if somebody is healthy, the bathing will bring him refreshing, resting, but also the numbness of his body. So, you must guard the things we owe to keep, namely the heart and the tongue not to judge and not to despise anyone. This is for the bathing doesn't' bring condemnation to the layman.

Regarding the showing to the doctor, to him who is more consummate it is characteristic him to leave everything in God's hands, even thought that will be difficult to him. And he who is weaker, let him show himself to the doctor. This is for neither this is a sin. But it is a deed of humbleness, for being him weak, he needed to show himself to the doctor. But he must cogitate that without God neither the doctor can do anything, but God gives health to him who suffers, when God wants[1172].

771. Question: Some people are driven by the devil against me, because I am pious, because I do not go often to the marketplace, and because I do not occupy myself with diverse businesses either. And when, from time to time, I need to go the publish baths for washing myself up, I am ashamed, but I also fear not to offend those who are against me, by avoiding to go to the baths for my piousness. What does this mean, Father?

Answer: This is vain-glory. Youa re layman and, as I told you, the layman isn't forbidden from washing himself up when he needs it. And if stan drives some people to think that you are a prophet, in order to deceive your thought to get haughty, and you strengthen that lie about you, these are the things you should feel shame for, and also you must feel shame of the deeds transgressing the commandment of God, as the debauchery, the love for money, and the things alike. This is because these ones truly offend. And the man will be held accountable for those deeds not only for himself but also for

[1172] The opinion that the ill man can show himself to the doctor but he must cogitate that without God neither the doctor can bring him health, it frames within the teaching about synergy: the man must do everything he can but in everything there is God collaborating too, if we pray Him, and we cannot know what the man gives and what God gives. The man's effort, the man's skillfulness are filled up by the power of God. God Who created the nature, He can accomplish it through a plus of power.

hurting his neighbor. This is because a sin and a true offense is the bath united with drowsiness, and not the necessary bath. That bath that is now for drowsiness, but for need, it has not offense within. And he who gets offended he will make himself guilty through himself. And getting ashamed for that is out of vain-glory and it comes from the devil.

772. Question: You told me, Father, that true offense causes he who transgresses the commandment of God; and that that one will be submitted to the judgment for harming his neighbor. But then why the Apostle told to that one who was eating meat sacrificed to the idols: "You can eat, for nothing in the world is sacrificed to the idols. But if your brother gets offended by that, do not lose with your food him whom Christ dies for" (1 Cor. 8: 4-11). Behold that he held him guilty because of harming another through a food non-stopped by a commandment of God, but he forgives the another for his weakness.

Answer: First of all, brother, The Apostles commanded and asked that nobody to search for the cause, but everybody to obey his commandment as to the law of God (1 Cor. 11: 16). Besides, I am telling you that what I am thinking. In this case there are two different things: the circumstance and the deed. The first one was the worshipping brought to the idol, as means which the devils were worshipped through; the second one was the meat brought as sacrifice to the devils and which seemed to the weak one as truly sacrificed to the idols. Th weak one, by seeing a believer eating those meats, himself felt urged to eat those meats which were seemingly brought as offerings to the idols. But by that he was defiling his conscience. But the believer didn't reckon those meats as offerings brought to the devils but he reckoned those meats as holy food, created by God, so that he was eating while having a clean conscience and he was doing nothing evil. But because the brother was weaker in his faith and he reckoned that that was meat sacrificed to the idols, the Apostle reproached the believer who ate an unbeneficial food that harmed the neighbor, a fact that is foreign to the love according to God. This was because by eating he wasn't fulfilling a commandment of Christ, and by not eating he didn't transgress any commandment. And the Apostle asked

him to rather choose the building up of the neighbor than the food.

Regarding the bathing, washing somebody up isn't inappropriate by itself. Neither it is forbidden. And he who is offended by that he himself takes his condemnation for that. So, if a layman gets ashamed because of washing himself up, especially when he needs that bath, because of the slander coming from the people, it will mean vain-glory. And that harms the man. Therefore, when you need to wash yourself up, do it in the fear of God and not with drowsiness., because the drowsiness is contrary to the will of God and it will harm your soul.

773. Question: Every food contains some sweetness. Doesn't that harm him who eats it?

Answer: He Who has put such sweetness in any food is Master God. So, that won't harm him who shared it with gratitude. But one must guard himself against getting addicted to anything[1173], because the addition harms the soul.

774. Question: Doesn't one due to do everything with the whole cleanness? For instance, the things belonging to the homestead, or others?

Answer: It is not inappropriate to be anything clean and having a good countenance while being used. But one must not get addicted to such an approach. This is for the lord enjoys all cleanness. But if you see yourself getting addicted to some something, you must remember the end of that thing, as it will rot out, and you will take the resting (from the part of the addiction). This is because nothing remains having the same countenance, but everything is corruptible and perishing[1174].

[1173] We see in these advices a remarkable lenience and understanding form the part of the two Old Fathers. The accent is placed on inside and not on the external things. The inside is the one that must be guarded clean.

[1174] Only the soul is unperishing. The soul gets ever more beautiful within the kind ones. All the things are relative; only the soul has an eternal value.

775. Question: Another loving-of Christ layman asked the same Oldman, telling him: If a Jew or a non-Christian invites me to some feast of his, or he sends me some gifts, will I accept that or not?

Answer: Do not accept that, because of being contrary to the canons of the Holy Church and you must not accept that[1175].

776. Question: But if that person is an important one and a friend of mine, and he will get upset if I do not accept those things from him? What should I tell him?

Answer: Tell him: Your love knows that they who fear God must guard all His commands. And you can in the similar thing done by yourself. This is because you wont ever allow your tradition to be transgressed because of my sake. I reckon that thin won't make you not to see my love. This is for ourselves have our tradition too from God and from our teachers, meaning that we are forbidden to accept anything from those having other faiths and feasts. But by that I won't weaken my love for you.

777. Question: There are some non-Christian sellers who sell their merchandise at their feasts. Is that forbidden one to buy form them that what he needs?

Answer: It isn't forbidden. This is for, according to the Apostle, one can buy everything that he can find in a slaughterhouse, without making any differences (1 Cor. 10: 25), as long as ne needs that.

778. a. Question: A loving-of Christ layman who was professor in world's sciences, he had a son who was very ill. And he asked the same Oldman if his son was to live or to die. And the Oldman answered him that his son was to live, And the son

[1175] That was forbidden by the apostolical canon no. 70 and by the canons no. 37 and 38 of the Synod from Laodicea.

lives as the Oldman told. After a while, another son of that man got very ill. And the professor came again and asked the Oldman about his son. And the Oldman told him:

We pray, but it depends on God's will to have mercy on him. Cut off your will and thank God in everything (1 Thes. 5: 18).

b. By hearing those things and because of not understanding the meaning of the word and of the answer, he believed that his son was to live. And when the professor turned back to his son, his son opened his eyes and he saw the Holy Father present there and he told to his father: "Can you see the saints standing near to us?". The father answered that he didn't see anybody, but his son told him: "Lo how they stand here as say: Why you father comes and go hindering us with his request for you to live? Lod, we are praying for you, and God told us: "His time has come for him to leave his body". And then the son told again to his father: "Lo, father, they pluck me away from a Sarazin who was dragging me with him, and they have brought me to a very luminous and indescribable place and there I saw innocent people who told me: "For the request of your father we prayer God for you to be brought in this place". And they officiate the Liturgy (the Synaxis) there and they are being imparted"[1176]*. And after that child uttered these words, he started saying the big prayer: Our Father Who are in heavens" and "Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost". And wo he yielded his ghost. And his father was much comforted, by being entrusted about the salvation of his son's soul. And the father*

[1176] The father prayed the Holy Father for his son to be healed. The Old Saints pray God, but God wants something else. Then the Old Fathers plucked the son away from a Sarazin that represented the devil, and they brought the son to some innocent children who were officiating the Liturgy. Thos ones told him that the prayer of his father reached them, through the prayers of the Holy Fathers, and they prayer God for the son to be brought to them, for he was innocent as they were too, in order the son to officiate together with them the Holy Liturgy and him too to be imparted with Christ. The prayers of everybody, from on earth and from heavens, all these prayers are intertwined in a common prayer, the desire of some ones being directed and elevated by the desires of others. No prayer and o anyone remains as a lonely ray directed towards God, but that prayer is united with the prayers of others, for a soul loves by all of them. The living one do not get united with the saints who left us more than they do in prayer; this is wanted by God when the people direct their thoughts at Him. By that the order in creation is restored.

came and announced the Oldman about those things and he asked the Oldman to tell him why he didn't tell him openly about the death of his son, as he told him about the other son that that one was to live. And answering him the Oldman said:

I told you to cut off your will for God, and by that I showed you about your son's death. Why didn't I tell you limpidly? You can understand that out of your life. Lo, you are professor in world's sciences and you have disciples. If you dictate a letter to somebody of them, won't that disciple write that what you wish, but will he still write that what he wants? Doubtlessly, he will write the things dictated him by you and not that what he wants. It is likewise in case of the saints: they do not speak from themselves, but God in Who speaks within them, sometimes more shadowed, some other times more limpidly. And in order you to be convinced that it is to, the Lord Himself told His disciples: "Not you are speaking, but the Ghost of your Father is speaking through you" (Mt. 10: 20). So, the saints speak as God wants, and not as themselves want.

c) By hearing these things and being convinced that that was so, the professor said: "But how comes that we find out that to the Old Fathers all their requests were fulfilled?". And the Oldman answered him:

Not al of their requests were fulfilled, but they only wrote down those requests which were fulfilled to them. Be convinced about that by that word that says: "A certain man came to him and told him: My son is badly tormented by a demon. And ai brought him for many times to Your disciples but they couldn't heal him up" (Mt. 17: 14-16). If the Apostles weren't granted the fulfillment of this ask, how could we say that the saints are granted the fulfillment of all their asks? This was because the Apostles themselves wondered about that and they asked Him: "Master, why couldn't we heal him?". And He told them: "This sort gets out only through fasting and prayer" ((Mt. 17: 19, 21; Mk. 9: 28-29).

d) The professor asked the Oldman again: "And why the saints are not granted the fulfillment of all their asks?

And the Oldman answered him: God does all the things for the benefit of the people. And God knows better that what is beneficial to the people, so that God commanded us not to say much word when praying and so us to ask for unbeneficial things, and He told us: "For your heavenly Father knows that what you need even before you asking Him for it" (Mt. 6: 8). As God defends you, He defends His saints too. God defends your against getting yourself haughty by openly receiving the things asked by you. And God defends His saints so that they won't get haughty in the imagination because of the unveilings said through them. This is because of not being they bigger than Apostle Paul, who says: "For the overwhelming greatness of the unveilings, so that I not to get haughty, it has been given top me a pin in my body, an angel of satan, to slap me over my cheek" (2 Cor. 12: 7). Go, take heed at yourself, and we are going to pray God to give you a strong heart and a steadfast faith. Do not be offended, therefore, by saints, for the Ghost of God Who speaks through them won't be wrong. Regarding the saints it is guarded the word: "Your good Ghost will guide me to the righteous land" (Ps. 142: 10[1177]).

And by hearing those things he has been entrusted into the Lord and he left rejoicing and blessing God Who glorified His saints.

779. Question: Another loving-of Christ layman asked the same Oldman: A dog bit my servant. Tell me if he is going to die or not. I am asking you about this because there are some people saying that a man bitten by a dog will die after forty days.

Answer: Your servant had nothing bad. Do not fear. But think at that what was written: "Not even a sparrow will fall into a snare without the will of our Father form heavens" (Mt. 10: 29).

[1177] In KJB we have: Ps. 143: 10: "Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness."; in ROB we have: Ps. 142: 10: "Teach me how to do Your will, for You are my God. May you good Ghost advise me to the land of the righteousness." (E. l. t.'s n.)

780. Question: By hearing that one those things, he reckoned that his servant wasn't to die. But after two days that servant died. And his servant, due to the fact that he had a great faith into the Oldman, and for he knew that the Oldman didn't lie, he wondered and he wasn't convinced that his servant really died. And he came and asked the Oldman: "Because I doubt the fact that my servant died or not, what could you tell me, Fater?

Answer: He died.

781. And how could he die, once you told me that he had nothing bad?

Answer: Because you suspected that he was immediately to die because of the bite of that dog, I told you the opposite. That's why I told you that your servant had nothing bad. This is for the death from God has nothing bad in it. And to announce you that your servant was to die for a death coming from God I added in my answer that nobody can die without the permission from God even if somebody would have been bitten by tens of thousands of venomous snakes[1178].

782. Question: And what did you give us such an unclear answer?

Answer: Do not wonder about the fact that I didn't tell you that limpidly. This is for we mustn't always speak limpidly about these things. This is because doing the opposite would harm him who uttered them and they are unbeneficial to him. Don't you remember that also our Savior by wanting to show His human nature, he used humble words, saying: "Where have you put him?" (Jn. 11: 34); and" How many breads do you have?" (Mk. 6: 38); and: "Who has touched Me?" (Mk. 5: 38). By that He thought the saints not to always use big words. That's why they too answered according to their benefit[1179]. And if

[1178] But the bite itself takes place by the permission of God.
[1179] If they always showed their knowledge of the future by using lipid words, they could be tempted to get pride from that. So that would be unbeneficial to them.

some people get offended, let them hear Paul who says: "We are the good fragrance of Christ within them who are saved and in them who are lost: to some of them we are a fragrance of life towards life, to others we are stench of death towards death" (2 Cor. 2: 15). So, for the believers we are talking like this, for them to understand and to benefit, and to the unbelievers in order they to despise us and us to benefit of that[1180].

783. Question: It happened often that this Oldman John sent, out of his humbleness, somebody's question to the Great Oldman, to Abba Barsanuphius, especially when it was to follow a great and wonderful thing. And the questions sent to the Great Oldman had never remained unanswered.

That's why, a loving-of Christ layman told once to Aba John: "Why do you mock us, Father John, because of having you the same power of the Ghost, but still sending our questions to the Holy and Great Oldman Barsanuphius?

Answer: I am nothing. And even if I had been something, I wouldn't have mocked you. I would have mocked you if I had sent your questions and you wouldn't have received any answer. But it is beneficial to you, for two to pray for you[1181]. This is for two are more than one. This is for He says: "My Father is greater than Me" (Jn. 14: 23). This was because He too was capable of doing His Father's deeds. But by saying that: "everything the Son sees His Father doing, the Son does likewise" (Jn. 5: 19), He not only once sends His disciple to His Father, saying: "Ask for it from the Father and the Father will give you in My name" (Lk. 16: 23). And He says again: "I do nothing from Myself, but My Father Who dwell within Me, He will commit the deeds" (Jn. 14: 10)[1182].

[1180] The saints will benefit is the unbelievers draw out of their saying conclusions beneficial to their helplessness.

[1181] A given answer implies also a pray done in order to find the true answer and for him who received the answer to be able to fulfill it.

[1182] It is here being affirmed the importance of the communion in all the things, according to the example of the Holy Trinity. Something can be done more easily and better in communion of thinking and of work with another, or with others.

784. A wonder committed by both Old Men: A man who was very-loving-of Christ and of guests, and who was committing the deed of Abraham (of accommodating guests), we have in danger of dying of certain disease, and he was already told by doctors that he was to die. So, one of his friends into the Lord sent a question to Oldman John about his dying friend, if he was truly to die and if he should write down his will.

And the Oldman answered them: The end has come. He should write down his will. And after saying those things, he told to the servant: "Go to the Holy Oldman (Barsanuphius) and ask him for praying for your master, for God to bestow him an add to his life for his good deeds of accommodating strangers. This is for, if the Oldman asks God for that, he will receive this grace". *And the servant went and asked for that and the Great Oldman prayer. But he didn't' say anything. And the servant was sent for the second and for the third time, by Abba John to the Great Oldman. And that one prayer and again he didn't say anything. And by finding out about that, Abba John told his disciple:* "That man won't die of this illness. The Great Oldman has received this grace from God". *And Abba John made all these things known to those who came to pray him for that ill man. And that man immediately escaped that danger and he got healed through the prayer of the Great and Holy Oldman Barsanuphius and of Abba John who followed and resembled to Barsanuphius in all aspects. And that man found out the cause of his healing and he progressed ever more in his deeds of accommodating strangers towards the glory of God.*

785. Question: Some loving-of Christ laymen who expected an injustice to be done to them by some powerful people, they asked the same Oldman John if they should ask for help from some other powerful persons and they to buy their protection.

Answer: That one answered and said: Do not buy the protection from a mortal and passing man. This is for he exists today but tomorrow he won't be anymore. And you have given your goods but the protection will die. And you will have lost together your good and your protector. Do you want to buy an imperishable protection? Buy the protection from God Who is the immortal and the imperishable Emperor, or of the poor. This is for He reckons as His, the things given to the poor. This

is for He says: "I hungered and you gave Me to eat" (Mt. 25: 35)[1183]. You know that if you buy the protection form people God won't protect you. And if you say: "But how comes that some of the Fathers have protectors according to the body?", I am telling you that the Fathers do not have that protection by buying it. This is for they prayed those by the love of God. And those ones gladly become the Fathers' protectors[1184]. Examine the thing thoroughly and you see that the Fathers' gave nothing in exchange for that protection. Neither their protectors asked the Fathers for something in exchange, but they asked only for the Fathers' prayers which are more precious than the silver and the gold[1185]. Verily so: what they gave to their protectors? When the anger of God will come, they will gain the mercifulness. Take heed, therefore, at the fact that since the beginning to the very end, they fulfill a thing of God.

786. Question: Because of occurring a disturbance within the Holy and of God Church, and being expected to be ordained some people who didn't obey the emperor's commandment, and being fears of some persecutions, some asked the same Oldman if they should leave and hide their goods away.

Answer: Is there anybody more powerful than God? If we are in the hands of God and if we sing together with David: "To Your hands I will entrust my ghost" (Ps. 30: 5[1186]), what should we fear for? Didn't God say that He was to destroy the city of Nineveh? And did He destroy it? No. But God forgave that city

[1183] Buy mercy by protecting the poor, and not from the powerful. This is for by doing that, you will have bought the protection from God Who is united with the poor. In this sense, one can say that God is the Emperor of the poor, and that the poor are powerful into God. But they do not abuse their power. They do not want to take the place of the rich, and to worldly master instead of them.

[1184] So, also through God, the powerful people of the world became the Fathers' protectors. This was for they set in movement, within those, theirs though at God, and their sensitiveness for God; they made them see the passing character of their life and of their power.

[1185] The Fathers' gave to the powerful, in exchange for their protection, something that is more precious than all the world's silver and gold. The Fathers gave the eternal life to their protectors, by their prayer to God, and not a plus of comfort in a passing and uncertain life of tomorrow.

[1186] In KJB we have: Ps. 31: 5: "Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth."; in ROB we have: Ps. 32: 5: "Into Your hands I will give my ghost; You have delivered me, Lord, You God of the Truth." (E. l. t.'s n.)

for the repentance of its inhabitants. Therefore, us too, let's turn ourselves with repentance to God and Go will bring everything to peace. And again, were there on earth any king more powerful than Nebuchadnezzar? And though, Daniel and the three young men prayer God Who is the heavenly Emperor and God subdued the earthly emperor. Withing your question there is hidden a twofold war: of the cowardice and of the love for money. Ww are in the hand of God and God has power to do His will upon us. So, do not run away, neither hide any of your goods.

787. Question: "The same ones asked the same Oldman: But what has been written for, the following: "If they banish you away form a city, you will run into another" (Mt. 10: 23)?

Answer: We haven't been banished away yet.

788. Question: A certain priest was elected by the inhabitants of city to be their bishop, and he asked the Oldman if God wants him to be a bishop.

Answer: Brother, you have asked me something above my power. This is because I am a too unimportant man and I haven't reached this measure yet. You have left the Apostle and you ask me who I haven't even started to live as a monk? And what the Apostle says?: "He who desires bishopric, he desires a good thing. But the bishop must be unstained" and the followings (1 Tim. 3: 2). But the Scripture says too, as from the part of God, towards the sons of Israel: "If you ask in My name a liar prophet and you will be worthy of hearing the truth, I will put the true word in the mouth of the liar prophet for him to tall that word to you"[1187]. That's why I too am telling you: "If you have adorned your house beautifully and if you have prepared your heart towards receiving this well-fragranced chrism" (2 Cor. 2: 15), according to eth teaching of the Apostle, that will

[1187] He who asks while being full of preoccupation with God, he wakes up the responsibility of the asked one as well. Thus, the vibration of the conscience of the presence of God it crosses form him who asks to him who is asked. Or the asked one will be moves by the responsibility wakened up in him, so that he will pray God for giving him the true word. A serious interlocutor makes the another to be serious too.

have been prepared to you from God. This is for He is not a liar who says: "May God give you according to your heart" (Ps. 19: 4[1188]).

789. A vice bishop asked the same Oldman if he should leave his vice-bishopric and withdraw himself into monastery.

Answer: We do not advise you to forsake the care for the holy of God churches, as entrusted to you, but we advise you to take heed at your soul into the fear of God. Do not accept gifts form anybody, do not be biased in judgment, to not be ashamed of the person of the powerful and condemn the innocent. Banish away from you the love for money that is the root of all evils (1 Tim. 6: 16). This is for the love for money is called also as the second worshipping of idols (Eph. 5: 5). And do not get haughty in your thought but be the disciple of the Apostle who says: "Not cogitating the high things but letting yourself led by humble things" (Rom. 12: 6). Do not try to be pleasant to the people, because you know what is expecting for one like this: he will estrange himself from serving Christ. This is because the Apostle says: "If I still are pleasant to people, I will no longer be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1: 19). Obey the Lord Who says: "Learn from Me for I am gentle and humble in My heart and you will find resting to your hearts" (Mt. 11: 29). Quench the anger within you because of being a falling down from the state of human[1189]. Do everything according to the will of God and you will have God to your help. Always fear the death. This is because the death will unavoidably come to us. Condemn yourself in the moments of your exit[1190] and you won't commit sin against God. And if you reach the quietude, you will find resting united with the grace so that you will be at peace wherever you will be[1191].

[1188] In KJB we have: Ps. 20: 4: "Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel."; in ROB we have: Ps. 19: 4: "May the Lord give you according to your heart and Him to fulfill all your counsel." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1189] It is characteristic to the man to have self-control. That's why the man has conscience and freedom. The animal lacks these.

[1190] Here it seems being about every going out to some work supposed and needed by his serving.

[1191] The man will be able to be at peace also while doing his job, if he calls God in everything he does. It seems that the vice-bishop was at that time a bishop for the country parishes, unlike the bishop who was for the parishes from the city.

790. Question: A bishop who was a monk and who trusted the Old Men very much, he sent to be the Great Oldman asked if he should leave the world and turn back to the monastic life. He also asked for his prayers and blessing.

Answer: It is an appropriate moment for I t tell you the Apostle's word that says: "I have become mindless; you have forced me to" (2 Cor. 12: 11). But for it is about words told me according to God and not according to man, may I be allowed to tell God that what His servant Moses said: "Either you bring with me into the eternal life him who has been given to me as spiritual son, or erase me too from Your book" (Exod. 32: 32); and I not to see the face of Jacob, the father of Josephus, if I haven't Beniamin with me (Gen. 44: 34)[1192]. And I believe in His holy name that He won't deny my ask. This is for the joy of the Holy Trinity and of the holy angels it is the salvation of those who will be saved. So, I don't stop praying until God will give me the joy of your salvation. But take heed at those words not to make your thought drowsy and so to become indifferent. Remember in everything that the world is passing away (1 Cor. 7: 3), and remember that the world is temporary and feeling pleasure felt for the world it is corrupting. "Your better chose to suffer together with the people of Israel than to have the temporary pleasure of the sin" (Hebr. 11: 25). Remember that we are going to unwillingly leave the world and that our live is not long. This is because what is the man's life? We aren't sure that we are going to live in this world even from morning until evening. Let's willingly forsake the things form here, in order us to have a reward fore this. Let's rather choose the carelessness for the earthly things, we who want to show ourselves to the face of God, so that we to dare saying: "Get my soul out of prison, in order to confess your name" (Ps. 142: 7[1193])[1194]. Hurry

[1192] The live by oneself, not warmed up by the love of somebody who is close to us as a son, it is cold on earth too. Such a life couldn't be happy in heavens either. This is for the happiness consists of the warmth of the communion. And if you haven't done anything on earth for others, you haven't been able to gain their love. On the opposite, because you haven't done anything for them, or if you haven't done everything you could have, that will be a thorn that will make you suffer forever. Jacob is the symbol of God. The sons of Jacob are all of us. I cannot see the face of God without having Beniamin with me, another son of his.

[1193] In KJB we have: Ps. 142: 7: "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the

up, walk quickly "until it still is day" (Jn. 9: 4)[1195], before the night falls, during which the sinners and the lazy will cry then vainly repenting[1196]. Find out that the time won't be prolonged[1197]. And when the time has come[1198], the servant won't find mercy. But who has prayer Him and he was heard? The true servant of the true Master, that servant who fulfilled zealously His commandments. Let's fear that day and that fearsome hour, on which we will not longer be able to have as defender either brother or kindship[1199], either power of mastery, either richness or glory. Let's sell the corruptible things which drag us in the bottomless deep, and let's buy a wedding coat[1200] (Mt. 22: 12) in order us to enter the consummation. This is for, if we enter the consummation, we will achieve the consummation of the love according to God, that love that

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righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me."; in ROB we have" Ps. 141: 7: "Get my soul out of prison, in order my soul to praise Your name, Lord. I am waited by the righteous ones, until you will reward me." (E. l. t's. n)

[1194] It seems that the emperor was favoring them who wanted to make some changes in faith. Barsanuphius urges the bishop, who enjoyed the emperor's favor, not to obey emperor's will regarding those changes.

[1195] Get yourself out of the prison of the sad egotism here on earth, in order you to be escaped form your egotism also in the future life.

[1196] Properly-said, he who has been constantly postponing the time for his repentance, after exiting the time he will try vainly to repent. He will be petrified in the drowsiness of his soul, in insensitiveness, and that will be equivalent to the end of the time for him. The time will stop for him also in the sense of this helplessness of his soul to get out of his inertia. His repentance from there it is a sorrow for his life lived wrongly, but united with the impossibility of moving out of it.

[1197] In time there is change, in eternity there isn't change.

[1198] It is the moment by excellence. It is the las moment, that moment which all other moments we have been having will be concentrated in, and after that moment we won't have any other moment of life.

[1199] If you do not soften yourself, pray and repent for yourself, all the less will you be able to do that for somebody else, neither will be able your brother, who is in the same situation as you are, to dop that for you. There hasn't been a deep communion, a sincere communion, between you and him here on earth. You have been communicating only in superficial material things, serving passing interests. All the less will you be able to communicate there.

[1200] It is about the bottomless deep (abyss), without offering any support, in an emptied existence, one rather apparent and reduced to abstract schemes of the human wisdom, an existence that doesn't know about God sand about the mysterious richness of the reality. God too is an ocean an abyss of the meanings, of the love, of the light that is communicated, unlike the darkness that doesn't communicate anything. Within God you feel everywhere engulfed by the endless Being, but not by the void which you will remain after the corruption of the present image of the world, because you haven't been able to find the another, by cleaning up your egotism. This is the wedding coat: the celebratory coat of the clean life that is pleasant to everybody, by which we enter the chamber of the communicative gladness of the wedding.

removes the fear[1201]. Then we will sing joyfully together with the Apostle: "The love neve falls" (1 Cor. 13: 8)[1202].

My all-true son, may I see you in the Kingdom of God, in Christ Jesus, our Lord. I am embracing you into the Lord in the name of God. I am embracing you into Christ Jesus, I am embracing you the all-honored one into the Holy Ghost.

791. Another bishop sent to the same Oldman the request for an advice.

Answer: What could I tell to your love into God? Should I tell you that it is forbidden to the servant do give counsel to his master? But until now I haven't been able to deliver myself of my vain-glory in order I to reckon myself the servant of everybody. So, I don't' know how to excuse myself. I don't' find any escape from it except by telling you: "Forgive me, for the Lord, and pray for me in order I not to be condemned at His coming; and I to recognize God and I to take care of fulfilling His commandments and I to find mercy".

792. Question: Taking place a quarrel for faith, there was sent a bishop by the emperor, and that one asked what should he do? This was because he expected to face opposition from some powerful people from the world who weren't thinking healthy about the faith.

Answer: According to the things shown to us by your envoy, we reckon that after the extolling received from God by Daniel, Daniel also received the friendship of the emperor (Dan. 6). But by trusting God Who saves His servants (Dan. 13: 60) and Who is "near to them who call Him truly" (Ps. 144: 18),

[1201] There where is love among people, nourished out of the love for God, there won't be the fear among people. This is for no man can commit menacing deeds to his fellow humans. No one takes care of his interests, no one wants to assure himself against somebody else. Each one knows that his life comes to him through loving communication from another, and he does everything he can to assure that communication through his love for another.

[1202] They who sing aren't divided, but they are in harmony. At least on those moments they live the joy of the mysterious union of love among themselves. That's why during the Holy Liturgy, by feeling themselves in front of God, the people sing together. It is a mode of gathering themselves into God.

Daniel didn't fear the menace and the trap of the imperial commandment and he wasn't disturbed, but he leaned on the faith in Christ and so God extolled him by faith. And if truly is "the heart of the emperor in the hand of God, God will lean it" (Prov. 21: 1) towards where we want it. Be strong into the Lord, be strong.

793. Question: A bishop was accused of love for money and of other sins and he was hated by the people, so that he was condemned by the synod of that county. And after he was condemned, he resigned and the congregation voted him out of his episcopal chair. And the inhabitants of that city, by reckoning three men as worthy of bishopric, they couldn't decide whom to elect. That's why they sent a word to the Great Oldman Barsanuphius.

Answer: You do not choose anyone, but let that to the bishop, And the bishop will give you that one shown to him by God.

794. Question: Another loving-of Christ layman asked the same Oldman: Will the bishop surely give us one of those?

Answer: If they will want in a sole thought and with a righteous heart and according to eth faith in God, God will give them not only one of those but also an angel from heavens if they want that. Namely a man equal to angels. This is for cannot lie Him Who said: "Ask for and you will be given. This is for everybody who asks for, he will take" (Mt. 7: 7-8). And to them who ask for in a wrong manner, he said: "You ask for but you won't be given, because you ask in an evil manner" (Jas 4: 3).

795. Question: So, if one of them is better than the others, will God give us that one?

Answer: If they leave it to the bishop for electing one of those, and if God sees that one of those will be more beneficial that the other two, that one will be elected. For instance, if one

of them is harsh and they need reproaches, towards correction, that one will be elected.

796. Question: If the city id divided that some people ask one due to their faith, others because of their passion, but the proposed ones are equally good, what it will happen?

Answer: God will listen to them who ask through faith, and not the others, not because God rejects their proposal, but because their ask was evil.

797. Question: But what will happen if him who has been proposed by those who do not ask through faith, he sems to be better than the one proposed by them who ask by faith?

Answer: The knower-of-people God, by looking at the will of them who ask in a good manner, God will give them the another who was proposed by others, but not because of those ones' ask, but for the good ask of those ones who will accept the best one gratefully, even if because of their nescience they haven't proposed him.

798. Question: In this case will accept also they who asked with a good thought, the best one, contrary to their worthiness. How could we understand this?

Answer: God has mercy on the unworthy too, for the worthy ones. This is for He "sends rain over the righteous and over the unrighteous" (Mt. 5: 45). This is shown by God to us in the Holy Scripture, by saying towards Abraham: "If I find ten righteous in the city, I won't destroy this place" (Gen. 19: 32). If for ten righteous God said that He was to spare the city, how much more will he spare the righteous for the others?

799. Question: If all the candidates are proposed in good faith, but neither of the proposed ones is beneficial to them, will God give them somebody from Himself?

Answer: because they are worthy of benefaction, God will cross over their proposals and at the right time God will sow them the thought for proposing somebody else, or God will urge him who has the power for ordination to give them somebody more beneficial.

800. Question: But when all of them who propose somebody, they actually do not formulate their proposals in good faith and they still manage to propose a good candidate, will that one be given to them or not?

Answer: If the knower-of-people God sees that they repent, God will give them that one. This is for they are found worthy of their future repentance. But if God sees them remaining unrepented, God won't give them that one, because of their unworthiness.

801. Question: You said, Father, that even if the city gets divided, both the righteous and the unrighteous will rejoice of the good bishop given to them due to them who asked in a good mode. But them how could be true the saying of the Scripture that "any city that gets divided in itself, it won't stand" (Mt. 3: 24)? This is for, lo, the city gets divided but it will still stand united through the good ones.

Answer: It is there called division the tendency of both parts towards evil. Then will be fulfilled the word" it won't stand", namely in good. But the good doesn't' cause division. This is for the teaching of the Apostles it is one. And the Apostle said: "And if the unbeliever wants to part himself, let him part" (1 Cor. 7: 15). So, will we say that through that the Church has been divided and it won't stand? Let that not be! This is for the Lord said: "The gates of the hell won't defeat it" (Mt. 16: 18). But him who hasn't stood on the side of the good, that one has separated himself. And he who stand, he hasn't separated himself.

802. Question: The inhabitants of the city did according to the answer given them by the Great Oldman and they chose

three men. And they were given a holy and well-pleasant to God bishop. But the previous bishop, trusting his money, he left for Byzantium where he asked for his chair back. Ad the rumor was that the previous bishop succeeded and everybody were engulfed by worry. And they sent to the Great Oldman asking: what should they do? This is for they feared to appeal the emperor, because they feared the failure, and the damage that could occur to the Church. And the Oldman answered them:

Answer: Sent a request, in order you to announce the emperor that the removal of the previous bishop has been done justly. Sent also a copy of his resignation. And showing the content for being elected his successor, tell the emperor that the election has been done by God and not bye people. And so, the emperor will be convinced that he must remove any doubt form himself. Sand they who want to do this evil thing, they won't succeed but in losing their money and to be ashamed. And with him who spent their money, it will be that what the Scripture says about Samson, that "they of another nation perished" (Jud. 16: 30).

Question: By receiving those that answer, they were lazy in sending the request. And the previous bishop went to te capital of the county to the governor with the imperial order to be his episcopal chair be given back to him. And there was much noise and disturbance in the city, so that they sent to ask the same Oldman about that. And his answer was the following[1203]*:*

Answer: You have done bad because you were lazy to let the emperor know the truth about the things. This is for God hates the idleness[1204]. Still, I am telling you in the name of the Lord, that even if that one reaches the gate of the city, he won't enter the city.

[1203] Note in Volos Edition: Here seems to be not about the condemned bishop but about the metropolitan of that region, according to the canon no. 40 from Laodicea, who is called by the saint also as archbishop.

[1204] God doesn't love that man who because of his laziness he doesn't develop himself. God doesn't love the inert man. That's why no good thing is done without the help of God, and that's why we must ask God for help; but neither any good thing will be done without the contribution of the man.

After this answer of the Oldman the governor came into the city to fulfill the imperial order. And all of them were engulfed by discouragement and by fear, but they suddenly received the news about the emperor's death and all the planed things came to a halt. And the bishop left without any result, having his money spent vainly, as the Oldman predicted. And his prediction was proven by deeds. "That what is tied on earth, it is tied on heavens too", according to eth Lord's word (Mt. 18: 18).

804. Question: The newly ordained bishop, because of reckon himself unworthy of the sanctifier ministration and incapable of administrating the churchly things, he thought to resign and he sent a question about that to the Great Oldman.

Answer: Rejoice into the lord, you the servant of God and you the officiator of the Holy Mysteries. You must know that the Holly Apostle Paul wrote: "Brothers, each one of you to remain in that what God has called him to" (1 Cor. 7: 24). And I believe that you have been called by the will of God and not as a hireling, but as a shepherd[1205]. So, stop trying to leave, lest you will anger God. This is for He said: "The heavens and the earth will pass away, but My words won't pass" (Mt. 24: 25). Do not let yourself scared. This is for it was written that after Moses died, Joshua Navi feared to lead the people towards the Promised Land, and the angel told him: "encourage yourself and stand strong, for as I was with Moses, I will be with you too" (Joshua 1: 9). Hear too from me the unworthy, the same word: "encourage yourself and stand strong".

805. Question: The same one asked the other Oldman: Who must I ordain as clerics, Father? Or what live they should have?

Answer: You must ordain people worthy of God and good, in order they to serve at the altar of God. Especially those

[1205] The shepherd has the responsibility to guard the flock and to feed the sheep. The hireling serves for a payment, namely for himself. If the hireling leaves, there will remain the shepherd and he will hire another hireling. But the shepherd cannot forget about his sheep.

whom several people bear witness for, according to the Scripture (1 Tim. 3: 7). You must take care for ordaining those ones and to judge them after ordination. This is for God will hold you accountable for the Church if they will deviate from the Church. And by doing so, you show to God your intention for wanting to ordinate good people to the churches of God.

806. Question: If the Holy Fathers bear witness about somebody that he is worthy of being ordained, will their witness be enough, so that I won't need also the witness of other people?

Answer: You must be content with the witness of the Fathers. This is for they speak according to the will of God. And ones like these are wanted by God to be His servants. And whether after the testimony of the Father you still find within yourself a thought of doubt, that is tares from the devil.

807. Question: But is after the testimony of the Fathers that one doesn't' want to accept the ordination, or if he left after being ordained, what should I do?

Answer: If he doesn't want to accept the ordination, you will force him to. And if he still runs away from ordination after you attempting to force him, that must not be reckoned as a guilt to those who testified about him[1206]. The guilt will be his because of disregarding the will of God. This is for he must prove himself and he must toil fulfilling the thing of God. And if you see yourself powerless, if he is "seasoned with salt" (Col. 4: 7), you should again ask the saints and do according to their opinion. This is because many of the saints refused to accept to be priests but they were forced by God. Moses said too: "See and choose another one" (Exod. 4: 13). And Jeremiah said: "I am young and I cannot speak" (Jer. 1: 8). Other Fathers too they ran away from priesthood. But by being they forced and ordained, they bore the task of serving for the name of God. And

[1206] Neither must somebody strive at all costs to become a priest, if he doesn't feel the calling to priesthood, nut neither one must easily disregard the calling he feel within himself, or the calling ascertained by others in him. God doesn't give any gift vainly. He who disregards the gift he will be held accountable in front of God, because of not cherishing and developing that gift as he should. Where there is a gift, there will be a duty too (Gabe und Aufgabe).

he who is forced to come but he still refuses, the actually runs away from obedience. And the Scripture says: "The obedience is better than the sacrifice" (1 Kings[1207] 15: 22). And if you look at others who appease themselves into withdrawal and they never meet anybody, you must not cogitate that they should come among people. But if some of them meet the people and if necessary, they do not avoid entering the villages and the cities, and they are testified as good and skillful, those ones must be forced by the bishops to accept the ordination. This is for these can be useful not only to their souls but also to the souls of others. That's why the Apostle ordered to Titus "to place priests in each church" (Tit. 1: 5), doubtlessly, worthy of this job, as for instance was Timothy. And, also Saint Gregory and others like him were ordained forcedly[1208]. And if we research, we will find many other servants of God in our times who did alike, but by being they forced much they accepted this toil, because of fearing to disregard the will of God. And if somebody refuses recklessly, there will be needed prayers, in order that refusal not to endanger his soul. This is because of happening that satan topples over the man, by making the man to search for some justification. May God banish satan far from our souls and from all the ones who fear God. Amen.

808. Question: The same bishop wanted to ordain, into the fear of God, deacons on behalf of the Church and to place some people in churchly administrative positions. But because he didn't know whom he should chose according to God, he sent a list to the same Oldman with the names of the candidates, so that the Oldman to choose whomsoever he wanted. The Oldman chose some of them who, humanly, they seemed to be unfitted for administration, and the bishop wondered and asked the Oldman about that. And the Oldman answered thus:

Answer: I didn't appoint by myself, but I prayed and that what God showed me, that I chose. But not because I was worthy it was that answer given through me. But because it was

[1207] In KJB we usually call this book as *1 Samuel*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1208] It is not about a coercive ordination, but it is about insisting to persuade somebody to accept to be ordained.

necessary, God opened the mouth of the female donkey (Num. 22: 28).

809. Question: The same one sent to ask the same Oldman John how the deacons could manage to fulfill their jobs and they to be sent to bring the necessary answers, while they are unskilled in speaking and despised by people?

Answer: Tell to your master bishop: If you become like Abraham, God can raise sone to you out of these stones (Mt. 3: 9). And if you force yourself to put the whole your trust in God, if you appoint as administrators unskilled and inexperienced people, God will make them more fearsome than the rulers. And if you send them to bring answers to all the things you want, you will succeed through them towards the glory of the name of God. And if not, even if you sent as advocate an orator, he would come back without any result. The sons of Israel were strong in wars and they kept their heart into righteousness, they defeated their enemies, and when they didn't take care of their salvation, they were defeated by their enemies.

810. Question: And Hos can I become like Abraham?

Answer: I didn't tell you like Abraham in all aspects, but only in the cutting off of your will as he did, by showing that even in his decision to sacrifice his own son. His virtues were many. And if we cannot become like Abraham in all aspects, let's be like him at least in the visible aspects[1209].

811. Question: I am convinced that the things you told me are from God and I must fulfill them. But I reckon that all the people within church will be offended by this decision of mine and this thought of mine is difficult to bear. What do you command me: should I fulfill all of them or only those which are useful in the things I do?

[1209] If we cannot fully obey with our inward thoughts, let's be obedient at least in our external deeds.

Answer: The Lord said: "Everyone who doesn't hate his mother, his wife, his children, and even his soul, he cannot be My disciple" (Lk. 14: 26). And hating his soul means cutting all his will through ascesis. And one like this won't pay attention to the people's words and he doesn't try to be pleasant to them, but he takes heed at the questions of God and at the answers he received through the mouth of the saints[1210]. But he who asks he must believe that God puts in the mouth of the asked one the answer according to his heart[1211]. This is for he says: "May Him give you according to your heart" (Ps. 19: 4[1212]).

So, we have shown ourselves that we are people, by not being able to endure the condemnations and the troubles coming from the people. Even if one wanted to teach everybody, he wouldn't be able to do so. This is for not everyone wants the same thing.

[1210] God asks us questions, by starting the dialogue with us. And we must not only answer these questions, but themselves His questions are imprinted within us and they make the man a being who asks endlessly. Any answer given by the man to a question he is asked, it will give birth to another question.

In the fact that the man doesn't find a definitive and total answer neither within himself nor within world, the man feels that the definitive answer is beyond him and beyond the world, in an absolute infinite. That's why the man will ask endlessly, but he will never reach or cross the border. With the asking character of the human being was occupying himself the German theologian W. Pannenberg, in his study "Die Frage nach Gott", in his book "Grundfragen systematischer Theologie", Gottingen 2/1979. But one answers God's questions by fulfilling God's commandments, which are directions for following the road that we can advance on, in the knowing and in the real imprinting of God within us. That's why the saints gave the bets answers to the question from God, and through the answers with the deed they advanced into the knowledge of God Who was reflected ever more clearly within their being. At Saint Gregory of Nyssa, the answers to the questions from God, as practical progresses towards God and within God, by fulfilling God's commandments, those answers are called "epektasis", extensions beyond the levels reached by the won being into God.

[1211] But the man asks not only on himself, but he asks also others. And the man received the best answers from God through the mouth of the saints. But God gives him answers through the saints according to the level which that man has reached on. By this it is shown that him who asks he too helps to the answer, or he makes that answer to be given to him according to the level he has reached by his efforts. This is for the answer equals the understanding occurring within man. But the saints, they occasion to the man and confirms to the man that understanding. This shows again the intimate union, or the reciprocal interiority between him who is spiritually advanced and he who asks him. But that depends also on him who asks, as it can be seen in the following rows within this text. The responsibility wakened up in the questioned one, in front of God, it determines him to receive also that answer that is appropriate to him who asks.

[1212] In KJB we have: Ps. 20: 4: "Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel."; in ROB we have: Ps. 19: 4: "May the Lord give you according to your heart and may Him fulfill all your counsels." (E. l. t.'s n.)

You have asked me about consummation, namely about that power of throwing everything upon God so that God to choose them whom He wants and about the fact that when we reach the answer, we don't accept that answer. This happens because we don't know that God sees differently than the people see. This is because the people notice (often) only the visible aspects. And the people mix (within answers) their will too[1213]. But God sees also the invisible aspects and the deeps of the heart; and God sees the things to come too, as present. But we benefited much out of knowing that until now remains within us that what is human. By this we find out our measures, or where we are, and we still humble ourselves in order us to take the gift of the humble[1214]. Consequently, we prayed to God for as He gave prophet Hezekiah instead of man dung ox dung (Hez. 4: 12-15), and as God gave a king to the Israelites when he saw that they wanted a king (1 Kings[1215] 8: 5-22), we pray God to descend, likewise, to the will of our helplessness. And lo that His kindness descended all the way to cut off His will for us[1216]. So, if we do not defame on ourselves, by admitting that

[1213] The man must give answers to himself, for he must ask questions to himself. Or, the man must ask for answers to his questions from another as well. But the man often doesn't accept the true answers given him by his heart, or by a holy man. But the man wants superficial and inappropriate answers to his questions. That's why the man remains locked up into darkness. And in the end, the man renounces to ask himself essential questions. Thus, the man comes closer to the animal by no longer searching except for that what fulfills his bodily instinct. The man must answer according to the question from God, namely according to God's will, for the man's natural development. IN the possibility of using the world in a liar manner, it is shown the man's freedom. On the other hand, it is characteristic to the man a ceaseless progress in finding out ever more conform words for expressing the indefinitely complex reality given by God. As the man advances into the discovery of the creation's complexity, he sees the creation as imprinted by the human personalism, in last analysis by the divine personalism. But if the man reduces the reality only to the material reality, the enrichment through words expressed by the man, it will be unilateral and remained in superficiality.

[1214] Even if we cannot give the answers according to the measure of the questions, we will still gain a lot by admitting this fact. This is for by doing so we admit our limitation, and so we know Him Who surpasses us infinitely. By this we humble ourselves and thus we still receive the gift of a true knowledge.

[1215] In KJB we usually call this book as *1 Samuel*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1216] This is the supreme kenosis, or the descent of God to our weakness. God allows un into our helplessness, by cutting off His will. This is for God doesn't want to treat us like some wood logs. And he also knows that some us of being left within the limits of the things which we can do by our will, we will have had enough of that poverty and we will come back into the wide content of the things wanted by Him. So, God have been allowing us to fall from bad to worse, as He allowed Hezekiah to fall for the ox dung to the man dung, and as he gave a king to the Israelites, though He knew that was not in their benefit. This helps us to humble ourselves even more.

until now we have still been eating vegetables, Go will make us worthy of solid food that is of them who are consummate into Christ. Amen.

Question: I have a pious and skillful secretary and recognized as such. But I hesitate whether I to ordain him or not, lest to offend some people, as one who would fulfill my own pleasure. What do you command me to do?

Answer: You do not think right about your secretary. If he was bad, unskilled, and not recognized as such, I would say ok. But if he is recognized as good and skillful, do not overlook that by invoking a liar excuse, the commandment of the Apostle who says that some people like these must be ordained (1Tim. 3: 7). You must know that he who does a thing with the fear of God, by not leaning his heart towards human things, even if that deed is followed by a temptation, that temptation won't last and neither will harm somebody. This is because such a temptation comes out of the devil's envy. I pray you to forgive me for the Lord. And pray for me.

813. Question: A monk who were previously an advocate, he asked for being ordained as priest in the church of the holy city[1217]. And the bishop, by being influenced by the intervention of some people he ordained that monk as a deacon, by tacking in account his title as advocate. And the bishop was prayed to ordain that monk as a presbyter. But the bishop repented for the committed deed so that he sent to be asked the same Oldman if he did good by ordaining that monk into deacon. And if he will do good if he ordains him into priest.

Answer: Once done, it will remain done. So, don't be sad about that. This is for powerful is God in order to lead, by His will, this brother to the knowledge of the truth. Regarding the priesthood, do not allow to be yourself influenced, for a while, to give it to him. This is for, if the will show fruits worthy of this ministration, God will let you know about that. This is for God is not far from us (Acts 12: 27). That's why you shouldn't pay

[1217] In the church from Jerusalem.

attention to his title as advocate, or only to the world's wisdom. This is because, if the man doesn't have the spiritual wisdom, he vainly will have the worldly wisdom[1218]. But blessed is him who has both of these wisdoms. This is for he says: "Every scholar having teaching about the Kingdom of Heavens is like a rich man who gets out of his treasure new and old things" (Mt. 13: 52). Take heed not to allow yourself be carried away by any wind. This is for "the bad sayings corrupt the good habits" (1 Cor. 15: 33).

814. Question: And if I don't know whom to ordain for the church es from villages, what will I do?

Answer: The people from villages will bear witness. And you will trust their witness and you will throw the responsibility upon them, you will ordain the candidates recommended by the villagers. And they will see. And you will be not guilty.

815. Question: And if a village has enough clerics, but the villagers bear witness for others too, because of wanting those too, should I listen to them and ordain these too even unnecessarily?

Answer: If ac church has enough clerics, you must not ordain others more, in order there not to occur disturbance. So, there where are enough clerics, you should not listen to the people who testify for other more. This is because, if a village has ten worthy candidates whom the people testify about, that they are worthy, should one ordain those too? No. But one must do everything orderly. But if they really need another cleric and they testify about a candidate, you must ordain one even though he refused to accept the ordination.

[1218] The world's wisdom, by the fact that it is defined, it locks up that what it knows within separating limits, by remaining far from the reality which all the things are united in, mysteriously and undefinably. This unity of theirs, we will be able to see it at the fullest within God if we open ourselves to Him.

816. Question: A village needs a priest and the villagers recommend two candidates, and one of those is married for the second time, but the other is poor. Which one should I ordain?

Answer: You must not ordain him who is married for the second time, because of being that against the canons[1219]. But you will ordain the poor one. But you should think at where you could give him some help from, because of his poverty.

817. Question: Among the clergy ordained by us there are some serving. Other, who were ordained somewhere else, they are added by the request of the village, to that village's clergy, being they serving too. Should done of them to be appointed to civilian tasks?

Answer: Those who are ordained or appointed at the request of the villagers must not be submitted neither to the bodily servings, not to the monetary dues (of that village). And they who have been ordained because somebody asked or exerted pressure for that, they smut not be submitted to the bodily servings, but only to the monetary dues, even if it was heard that they would have paid for their ordination. This is for their status must be honored. And he who has paid he will be the one bearing his sin.

818. Question: By ordaining somebody, I caused upset to somebody else, and I feel uneasily, because I don't know if I did rightly or wrongly.

Answer: If your sadness is caused by your another's sin or carelessness, you will cogitate that you have done rightly. But if it is a bodily sadness, because you have done that thing out of avenge, you should repent and ordain that one according to your own decision.

819. Question: Diverse persons caused me much unrest, by asking me for ordaining some candidates, whom I have been

[1219] The Apostolic Canon no. 17.

reckoning about, until now, that I must not ordain any of them. Now, a good friend, loving-f Christ, who toiled much for us at the powerful people, out of his faith into God, he asked me to ordain a layman by testifying about that one that is a good man. Should I do that for him?

Answer: If you put the whole your strut in God, you wouldn't worry about anything. But because you still need people, you should thank him for the thankfulness he produced to you. This is for it was written: "As you want the people to do to you, you too do them alike? (Lk. 6: 31). Likewise, if that one who asks you for that he is a good man, and the man whom he testifies is a good man too, you should doubt his testimony and hesitate to ordain the candidate recommended by him. This is for he will bear the responsibility. And if you know that the candidate is not good, but he is stained in some regard, you won't accept to ordain him, otherwise you will bear the damnation.

820. Question: There were exposed some people as being Manicheist and they ran away form danger and they went somewhere else in order to be baptized, if they could. What do you order me to do?

Answer: For the exposed Manicheist you should write in order you to impede their intention by showing to those who want to baptize them that they are actually Manicheist. And it will depend on those to baptize them or not. This is for not everybody pays the due attention to these things. And not everybody knows that such people like these need much zeal and a long time and hearing the godlike words and to be catechized regarding the Holy Mystery, and only then to be they accepted; so, they must not be accepted immediately as they arrived. This is because of being this a fearsome thing. And there where it is not longing for God, we must remember our Master Who sys: "Do not give the holy things to the dogs" (Mt. 7: 6).

821. Question: It has been issued an imperial commandment that stops the few to maintain their rules

anymore. It is alike to the schismatics too. And some of them have come after the Holy Passover has ended, to be baptized, and other to be imparted. Should we welcome them? And when must we reckon them as worthy of Baptism and of the Holy Impartation?

Them who want to be baptized (enlightened), you must accept them. And you must give them the Holy Baptism in the Holy Forty Days of the Easter Fasting, or at the Ascent of the Savior. And so, they will have the whole week as holiday. But if you suspect someone that he wants to do that only formally, or because of fearing the imperial order, you will tell to that one: "If you come because of the imperial order, that will be a sin. But if you come by the fear of God, and for life, you will gain two things: that one of the life and the bodily one". You should tell the same thing also to them who want to receive the Communion (the Holy Impartation) with the Church[1220]. And if they tell you: "We come for God" you will immediately welcome them. For they are Christians.

822. Question: A man from another nation was caught in the country of the believers and many say that he should be killed or burnt. Is that right or wrong?

Answer: He must not be killed or burnt. This is not a deed characteristic to the Christians. But he must be disapproved and give him a fine. This is for these things touch the people. Then he must be entrusted to somebody to fear God and he will teach the stranger the way of the lord and that will enlighten him.

823. Question: Father, I have big upsets from the people who do my injustice and whom I resist. I am reckoned as their enemy and I do not find somebody to help me. That's why I am troubled and I want to leave the Church.

[1220] One can see from here that the participation to Christ is one with the full communion with the Church. Those who were excommunicated were kept far from the Holy Impartation, but also from the full communion with the Church.

Answer: Tell me whether or not it is a sin to transgress the Apostle's commandment. That is obviously a sin. If so, the Apostle says: "Are you ties to a woman? Do not try to untie yourself" (1 Cor. 7: 27). But you married the Church. Do not trye to part with it. Otherwise, you will suffer temptations and you will repent for this deed of yours. So, you must suffer manly the troubles coming upon you, and so you will find the mercy of God. This is for he says: "he who endures to the very end, he will be saved" (Mt. 10: 22). Resist the evil and the lord will bring your enemies to your feet. And the opposants will become your friends. Fight to the death, for truth, and God will fight for you[1221]. Do not ask the people for help, because he who trusts the people he will fall quickly. The help form God surpasses tens of thousands of people. This is for the Lord says: "The Lord is my helper and I won't feat that what the man can do to me" (Ps. 117: 6[1222]). So, lean your heart into the Lord and encourage yourself and be strong. And the lord will be with you.

824. The question of the same one towards the same Great Oldman: I do not oppose, Master, any of your orders. But pray for me in order I to receive the help from God and for I to be protected from the temptations rising against me.

Answer: I know that I am nothing[1223]. And I do not have prayer as God wills. But he who asks for somebody's prayers, he too must bring his small toil to the prayer of him who prays. This is for it was written: "Much can the prayer of the righteous

[1221] Only by fighting with the whole your power, there will be God too present within yourself, and God will fight with His power that will be intertwined with your power. If I fight drowsily, God won't fight powerfully within me. God wants me to be strong, but I am not strong if I don't feel my power straining. And in this training of mine there is God too working, on the measure of my straining.

[1222] In KJB we have: Ps. 118: 6: "The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?"; in ROB we have: Ps. 117: 6 "The Lord is my helper; I won't fear that what the man can do to me." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1223] Here we have a change of a sole word from the Socrates's sentence: I know that I know nothing". But only a Christian can operate this change. This is because the Socratic pantheism contains in this sentence a contradiction. The Christian know that he is a creature, and that he is not part of the supreme Being. And the supreme Being differs from the creature. But the Christian can sip power out of God through prayer. Only if the Christian has not prayer, only then he will be nothing, as it is said in the following phrase, though right when the Christian hasn't God within himself, he won't live his nothingness.

upheld by word" (Jas. 5: 16), namely helped by him who asked for prayers[1224]. Your angel must know that not only a little are you protected by God through the prayers of the saints. But take heed also at how the deacon prays for you, when saying the word of the Apostle: "Rightly teaching the word of the truth" (2 Tim. 2: 15)[1225]. Show the truth and do not be ashamed by man, neither you should try to be pleasant to somebody. And you will find grace in front of God and of the people. And do not cogitate anything according to the man. This is because of all the too human thing God gets disgusted[1226]. And let the Church not to do injustice to anybody, but let the Church be an example to everyone through justice. And God will be within you and you will be within God. And God will protect you against any evil and against all the traps of the enemies. May our Lord Jesus Christ be with your ghost. Amen.

825. Question: The same one, because of disregarding some right of the Church in order him to be pleasant to some people, he was surrendered by God permission, to temptation, and he got troubled, and he sent to ask the Great Oldman abut that. And the Oldman answered him:

Answer: This surrender was not done without the permission of God. Therefore, let's examine our hearts and we will find out what commandment we have transgressed, and because of that we have been surrendered to temptation[1227].

826. Question of the same one towards the same Oldman: Father, I know that I harmed both my soul and the holy Church of God. And that's why the opposition to the Church go harsher. This is because of being many and strong they who wage war to

[1224] All of us are weak. All of us get discouraged when being alone. This is an experience we always have. Even a simple word uttered by somebody else it strengthens us. All the more is our prayer strengthened by the prayers of others. There is a flux of power crossing from one to another.

[1225] One can see from here that at that time this was uttered by the deacon and not by the priest as it is today.

[1226] God wants us to have Him, or us to have our thought at Him in that what we are doing; But we think only at us in separation from god, as we or something could be separated from God's ultimate foundation.

[1227] All these answers were sent to a bishop, consequently to his questions.

the Church. And if I want to resist them, there will follow a loss for the Church. And as much as it depends on the man, there is not solution. But "To God everything is possible" (Mt. 19: 26). That's why I fall before you, Master, ask for forgiveness for me, and help me and the Church. And make the trouble stop, as you wish. This is for you can do that.

Answer: If to God everything is possible, and we believe so, let's do into Him everything we can and He will destroy them who resist us[1228]. This is for God "scatters the plans of the nations and he destroys the plots of the rulers. And His will remains forever" (Ps. 32: 10). You must uphold the truth and fight for truth. And God will wage war for you to His enemies[1229]. Those ones resist you bodily, but you stand up spiritually, namely through prayer and asks for everything, by asking God to help you. And "reproach, rebuke, and urge" (2 Tim. 4: 2), as it is due to a spiritual teacher. And do not fear them, "For are more numerous them who are with us than with them" (IV Kings[1230] 6: 16). These ones are with the devil and with the people having the same passions, while we are with God and with His saints. We trust God Who said: "I won't let you, neither will I forsake you" (Josh. 1: 5). And "He will do to us much more than we ask for or than we understand" (Eph. 3: 20). And He will fulfill with us the word: "Blessed is him who

[1228] This is the steadfast formula of the saint: when we set all our power in motion, God places within it His power too; or, when we set in motion the whole our power, that is a sing that God works powerfully within us. Then we surely succeed. God sets the whole our being in motion. Or, by setting ourselves the whole our being in motion, God has a propitious environment to work in. If there remained only our power, even if we set all our power in motion, we wouldn't succeed to do that what we want to. Our power is limited, but God makes us cross over its limits, over its "helplessness".

[1229] The Truth is Christ, for he is God and for He has within Himself the humanity in the fulness of its content brought back to normalness and to the living in a human form of the infiniteness of God. He who fight for this truth or for this human life into the godlike infiniteness, through him God himself will defeat his adversaries, by showing them how empty they are in comparison to them who have Christ within them. If the Son of God embodied Himself as man, that means that the man must be completed through God. Then the man lives the truth. The truth becomes reality to us when we too contribute to fill ourselves up evermore with Christ Who is God and true man. So, on one hand the truth is a given, and on the other hand we achieve the truth by fulfilling our need for being us united with God. We will fully have the truth in the eschatological future. The truth is given and it is being given to us, but we too advance towards discovering it, by advancing us towards actualizing the truth within us. We live the truth, anticipatedly, by prayer.

[1230] In KJB we usually call this book as *2 Kings*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

has the Lord as his helper, and who trusts his Lord God" (Ps. 145: 5[1231]).

Therefore, if a small loss is to come, we will despise it and we won't allow ourselves to the ashamed by the face of the man. This is because otherwise God gets angry, Let's stand into truth. And the enemies won't be late to be brought to our feet. And God Who is always extolled by His servant, He will be extolled.

You must have the saints as your allies, through they prayers to God. Teach, as you have heard, rightly, the word of the truth, as a bishop of God. And the people will bow down before you as before a true servant of God, with fear and with tremble and with love. This is for they who fear God they will be feared by people, as God's angels are feared by demons too. So, do not fear. This is for God and His grace are with you. Take from above that power that was taken by the Apostles, by the grace of Christ our God. And His grace will remain with you to your last breath. I am embracing you with holy embrace. I am embracing you into the Holy Ghost praying you to pray for me out of love.

827. Question: Father, the Church received much help from God after your holy words. And some of the people who did injustice to the Church and who started against the Church's members, they beg us for peace. And they promise us to heal themselves up and to correct the injustices they did against us and to appease their people who are against us. What do you command me? Should I accept them or not?

Answer: I they pray you, you will receive them for Him Who commanded us to forgive one another. And give them the opportunity to appease the others, mercifully or mercilessly. And let them be given as rule to respect the right of each one.

828. Question: It is good to keep the records of the Church?

[1231] In KJB we have: Ps. 146: 5: "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God:"; in ROB we have: Ps. 145; 5: "happy is him who has God of Jacob as helper, his trust into his Lord God," (E. l. t.'s n.)

Answer: If you keep the records as records of the Church you will keep the records of God. This is for you are the administrator of God and you owe to keep those records, so that fi there will be something more, you to feed the poor and the orphans, Whose Father and nourisher is God. And you to provide their families with subsistence goods. And if there is nothing in plus, you will take care of making something. If you do not so, you won't truly keep the records of the Church, but you will actually keep your own records, according to your will. And by doing so, there will no longer be kept the records of God, but of the devil. So, do everything according to God and you will be rewarded by Him.

829. Question: This loss was caused in diverse ways, and I am troubled because I don't have any means in my hand. What should I do?

Answer: The Scripture says that "him who does injustice to us, he doesn't do that injustice to you but to the Holy Ghost Who lives within you" (2 Tim. 1: 14). So, do not be sad for a human loss. This is for the lord Himself said: "You Father from heavens know that what you need even before you ask Him for that" (Mt. 6: 8). But you must search for the Kingdom of God, by doing its deeds, and all of these 'will be added to you" (Mt. 6: 33). And if you suffer because of the lack of material means, you will find plentifully in front of you all the goods, by the will of God. remember that it was written: "They who want to live according to god, they will be persecuted" (2 Tim. 3: 12). But he says again: "Rejoice into the Lord always when reaching into diverse trials" (Jas. 1: 2). This is the persecution and these are the temptations. But suffer them courageously and with faith and God will be extolled through you[1232]. This is for the

[1232] God will be extolled through you if you show how much you love Him by enduring so many troubled for Him. But also, for God will strengthen you into your patience. And these things will be seen by others and they will wonder about God's power shown through you. Our power that extolls God it is not shown when the things go well for us, but when we endure patiently the hardships. That's why we glorify Christ not only for His resurrection but also for His cross and for His decent, out of love for us, through embodiment, by taking all our weaknesses, pains, human emotions – except for the sin. That's why the whole Church's cult is doxological. Through the cult we show the glory of God in everything He did for us by descending to us. By that He has given value to our humanity, because by itself our humanity would have been nothing.

patience makes the man experienced. And the hope doesn't shame the man up. Pray for me.

830. Question: because the so-called execution-agents come into this city and they always expect gifts from the Church, I don't know what to do. Should I send them gifts? But by doing so I will upset God, because of me spending inappropriately the means due to the poor. Should I not send them gifts? But then they will speak evil of me to the rulers. What do you order me to do?

Answer: The execution-agents are in the service of the human governments and sending them gifts is the sign of the human fear. So, if we want not to fear them and if we want to stand strong into the truth, then we will listen to the word of the Apostle who says: "If you want to not fear the government, do the good and you will be praised" (Rom. 13: 13). Do not fear the slandering. This is for it was said: "Right in that what you are gossiped in, they will be ashamed those who speak evil about your behavior into Christ" (1 Pt. 3: 16); and again: "If I was pleasant to people, I wouldn't be the servant of God" (gal. 1: 10).

831. (V. 831 a). Question: Some counties of the province being troubled by the duke's soldiers, and the property of the churches being stolen, the chiefs of the city wanted to make that thing known to the emperor. But they feared the persecution form the duke. So, they sent to ask the Great Oldman about that.

Answer: If you believe that God upholds the poor, you will have courage in this thing. This is for, certainly, He Who upholds the poor he stays in from of the warrior for them, for Himself said: "For you have done to one of these all-unimportant one, you have done in to Me" (Mt. 25: 40).

832. (V. 831 b). The answer of the Great Oldman towards them who were lazy to do that.

Take heed not to be fulfilled with you the word: "After you started into ghost, are you now finishing into body" (Gal. 3: 3)? Don't you know that this is a thing of God? And that re not only you fighting for this thing, but also many other fight together with you through prayers? Take heed that, if you leave the thing of God that God will punish you. Regarding the governments, let nobody be afraid of them, for nobody can resist the will of God. Think always to fight to the death for the truth. And the lord will fight with you.

833. (V. 838). The answer of the other Oldman towards the bishop who asked about the same meddling of the duke and who kept his silence[1233].

Take heed at yourself. Because neither the duke not the emperor will save us on the day of the judgment. So, do not allow yourself to be scared by them in thig thing, in order you to find mercy on front of God. This is for not you will bear the burden for this thing, but God and the Oldman. And therefore, if you set in work your power, you will be partaker to reward. And if not, you will receive condemnation, Pray for me.

834. (V. 839). Question: Question of the same one towards the same one: Because the duke embraced recently the Christendom in order him to be pleasant to God, would you want us to write him a letter of friendship? This is for he has the power to correct the injustice done to us. And if you reckon that as good, will you dictate us the letter? This is for that will have much power, by comprising in it the words the Holy Ghost Who dwells within you.

Answer: You write him the following: We all the ones who fear God rejoiced for your coming to the faith into Christ. But we will rejoice even more when seeing the spiritual fruits of your coming as sprouting out of it. This is for it will truly be a joy to us, if the evangelic word is being fulfilled with you: "So to

[1233] It seems to be here about the bishop who wanted to find out to question no. 832, also the answer of Oldman Jon, and he didn't tell him that he already received an answer from Barsanuphius.

lighten your light before people, as by seeing your good deeds, they to extoll your Father Who is in heavens" (Mt. 5: 16). As your highness knows, the recently planted plants bring many and beautiful fruits. Because have been recently planted (neophyte), show everybody, towards their building up, the many and beautiful spiritual fruits of yours, towards the glory of the Holy and of-one-being Trinity and towards your praising by the loving-of Christ emperors, from whom you have received this great gift of the Baptism (of the enlightenment). And which these ones are spiritual fruits are, if not fighting for the faith into Christ and upholding the Christendom? This is for, though the Christendom is upheld mainly through Christ, but God wants to probe also the people's will to see where they are leaning to. Actually, the Church cannot be abolished. This is for the promise of God says: "On this rock I will build up My Church and the gates of the hell won't defeat it" (Mt. 16: 18). So, the good must come. But blessed is him whom the good coms through. So, you too who love Christ, steal this blessing. This I wanted you to know, you glorious Lord, that if him who holds the power was pagan and opposant to the faith, we wouldn't have anything to do but to close the churches until the loving-of Christ emperors would open them again[1234].

[1234] The Church isn't a reality locked up into present. The Church represents a tension and an eschatological perspective. Christ isn't only present within Church and within world. He comes to, and in His coming He is ever closer. But we too contribute to His coming. And for Christ is the spring of the good, the good doesn't only exist, but the good also comes, fighting against the wounds which attempt to remove the presence of the good and to impede the coming of the good. But to the continuous coming of the good, to imposing the good over the evil that impedes it, we too must contribute. This coming of the good will last until the end of the world, and the evil will resist the good to the very end. But for the fuller coming of the good depends also on people, and many of the people could remain evermore attached to the evil, so that the evil could increase. But, the more the evil makes out of this world a place less able to tolerate it, the closer will be the coming of Christ so that the come good to change the present image of the world. This is for the good cannot resign from expending. The good must come. Until the good could fit in this form of the world together with the evil the good was content to be in the world. But because of the evil tending to hold an ever-greater power in the world, right by that the evil contributed to need for changing the world.

This will be shown by the lessening of them who believe in Christ, even though their faith will be strengthened. And this state could be seen prefigured in that what the saint tells us in these rows. When the duke of this world, who is enemy to Christ, he will lock up the churches, then Emperor Christ will come and He will open up the churches and He will change the present form of the world.

835. The question of the bishop towards the other Oldman John: Powerful person from the city want to bring new customs into the Church entrusted to me and to ask for a tax on the wine brought in its harbors. And some of them advise us to take the entire tax and that will bring a great earning to the Church. Do you order us to take that tax?

Answer: It is inappropriate to the Church to collect taxes. That is a thing of the layman. So, you tell to those ones: If we are Christians, we don't need to obey the people but we follow Christ Who says: "As you want the people to do to you, you will do them the same" (Mt. 7: 12; Lk. 6: 31). But take heed that the things consecrated to the Church are consecrated to God and you must not diminish anything of those. Woe to him who cause losses to the Church[1235]!

836. (V. 840). Question: The Church has canons that forbid the people to go to theaters in the evening[1236], or to participate to the pagan feasts. But the chief of the province wants to disregard those. What do you order me to write him?

Answer: Write him these: You are a servant of God as the Apostle says (Rom. 3: 6) and you are required to keep His commandments, as I am required too. So, we owe to guard the high laws of the Church towards the praise of God and of ours. I remember you this for I love you as our friend. This is because it is inappropriate to the Christians and to loving-of Christ people that you to cherish more the human pleasures, which harm your souls, than you to serve God.

837. (V. 841). A great and powerful fellow citizen of ours, who lives in Constantinople, he fights strongly to be the people allowed to go to theaters. What do you command me to write him? If he wants to plot against us, pray so that him not to be successful.

[1235] It is inappropriate to the Church to collect taxes on the wive brought by ships into the harbors. But it is also wrong to collect taxes from the Church for the wine brought to it.

[1236] It is about the Canons no. 24 and 51 of the Ecumenical Synods V-VI and XVII from Carthage, which forbid the people from going to theaters.

Answer: Write him like this: "Son, the whole our prayer is that God to increase the faith of the Christians into His fear and Him to raise the horn of His Church. God is the hope for our salvation. And you should know that we have no other help except from the Church and form the prayers of the saints. He who leans on them he finds them at the right moment. But the theaters are the workshops of the devil. And he who strive to support the theaters he will fall off the flock of Christ. But we know that you are sons of the Church of Christ and you always strive to do the things pleasant to Him. So, you do not need to be lectured. But I am writing you in order I to remind you not to become yourselves partakers with them who strive to sustain the devil's theaters[1237]. This is because in time of need they cannot help to anything, except to drown they who run to them. And he who has his heart attached to God and who wants to sustain the things pleasant to God, that one will daringly call God on the day of his trouble and he will be guided towards God Who bestows to each one according to his deeds (Ps. 61: 11[1238]). You now that "the form of this world passes" (1 Cor. &; 21), but the faith of God remains forever (Ps. 116: 2[1239]; 1 Pt. 1: 25)". Write them these things and do not fear the plots of the people, and fight for the faith in God and have God as your Helper. And he who resists God will be drown as Pharaoh in the Red Sea. And he who believes doubtlessly, he will stay steadfast on the hard Rock (Mt. 7: 24).

[1237] The interdiction to go to the theaters it is maintained up to these days by monks. The interdiction given back then by the Church regarding the attending of the theaters was probably because the theatrical creations were then inherited form antiquity and in them was affirmed the faith in gods.

[1238] In KJB we have: Ps. 32: 11-12: "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God. // Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work."; in ROB we have: Ps. 61: 11: "Once spoke God, I heard these two things: that the power is His and Yours, Lord, it is the mercy; that You will reward each one according to his deeds." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1239] In KJB we have: Ps. 117: 2: "For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord."; in ROB we have: Ps. 116: 2: "For His mercy has been strengthened over us and the truth of the lord will remain forever." (E. l. t.'s n.)

838. (V. 832 a). Question: Father, I strive on each day to fast until evening. Tell me is that is right. And if I must pray before doing something.

Answer: Regarding your fasting, examine your heart in order not to be stolen by the vain-glory. And if your heart haven't been stolen, you will examine it again, and see if your fasting doesn't make you weak in fulfilling your duties. This is for this weakness isn't useful. And if it doesn't harm you in that regard, the fasting is good.

And the prayer is luminous light. And each Christian must pray before doing something, and especially the priest of God must do so.

839. (This is not given in Manuscript Pantelimon, no. 192). Between bars: Master, pray for me, in the name of the Lord. This is for I put all my trust in God and in your holy prayers.

Answer: May the Holy Ghost entrust you that you always are in my prayers, day and night… (the end is missing).

840. (Partially given in the V. 832 b; it is not complete except in the Manuscript Paris, in Greek, no. 873). A loving-of Christ layman who left his country for fighting in the name of God for His Church against some people who were making troubles, he sent to the same Oldman for asking him for a word of life and for an urge.

Answer: Keep strongly the love for God, the truth, and the freedom. And do not fear to help according to your power, praying for everything and step assertively on your ways. This is because they who try to be pleasant to the people they are stranger to God and the Holy Ghost isn't within them. Have the Ghost of God and He will teach you everything as it is right. This is because you cannot succeed without Him anything as it should. Guard yourself against the disturbance of the anger. Do not fear anybody, but remember the word: "The Lord is my Helper, I won't fear what the man could do to me" (Ps. 117:

6[1240]); and: "All the nations surrendered me and I pushed them back in the name of the Lord" (Ps. 117: 10[1241]). If it happens that somebody gets disturbed by you, tell him with humbleness, with love, and with understanding, the truth. And God will tame him down by the prayers of the saints. You have also the teaching of the Fathers and with God it will protect you from the evil one. So, be strong and courageous through Hod (The Second Law 31: 6).

841. (V. 833). Question: When I doubt about something, if I should do it or not, tell me what should I do?

Answer: When the need occurs for you to do something, pray God for three times, asking Him not to allow you to stray away. And if you remain in the same thought, you will do what that thought tells you to do, for that thought comes from God and not from you. When you do not achieve the certitude, you will ask the Fathers.

842. (V. 834). Question: When the Fathers tell me something but I cogitate the opposite, I am at war with my trust in them. But I tell to my thought: "It must be like the Fathers say". Is this a sign of trust or of mistrust?

Answer: Answering to you thought like that it is a sign of trust. This is for, if the Fathers tell you that the darkness if luminous light, you will strive to believe them. But one need to pay much attention. This is for God tells us now a word that must be fulfilled and after a little while there occurs a change in that thing (the circumstance changes). And if somebody is not strengthened in faith, he will be offended. It is likewise with the things said by the Fathers. This is for some people do not know the meaning of the said things, neither they know the oikonomia of God regarding them, so that they always ask:

[1240] In KJB we have: Ps. 118: 6: "The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?"; in ROB we have: Ps. 117: 6 "The Lord is my helper; I won't fear that what the man can do to me." (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1241] In KJB we have: Ps. 118: 10: "All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord will I destroy them."; in ROB we have: Ps. 117: 10: "All the nations surrounded me and in the name of the Lord, I defeated them."

"What haven't the Fathers told us like, about the occurring change?". This is for they always speak relatedly to the present time. But if the Fathers were asked after a change has occurred, they would say differently, according to their Teacher Who said that He was bringing the anger upon Ahab, but for Ahab changed, God too went ahead from His anger, saying: "I won't bring the anger during his days" (3 Kings[1242] 21: 29). What would therefore tell the mindless ones about God" That God is in nescience? They are wrong, because of not knowing that the judgments of God are bottomless deep and therefore non-comprisable. These mysteries have been entrusted to the believers. But not all of them receive these mysteries. You must know, therefore, brother, that the true Fathers do not get upset when they seem to be liars to them who do not know the mysteries of God. This is for if this doesn't bring them any benefit, it neither harm them. This is for they do not want to have a glory as their Master has[1243].

843. (This is not given in the Manuscript Ivir no. 1307). Question: The anger of God started against the people, many of them possessed by unclean ghosts they were barking like dogs and so they prophesized, so that many people went stray because of believing that those were saying the truth. Some loving-of Christ laymen sent to ask the Great Oldman about that.

Answer: By knowing form before our weakness, God told us: "There will rise liar Christs and liar prophets who will do signs and wonders in order to deceive, if possible, even the chosen ones" (Mt. 24: 24).

844. (This is not given in the Manuscript Ivir no. 1307). The answer of the same Great Oldman to the bishop of the city who

[1242] In KJB we usually call this book as *1 Kings*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

[1243] The circumstance changes, but the man's thought changes too. Within man too, there is a virtual torrent out of which can come other and other thoughts. And God give us freedom. It might be that right out of the connection with the doglike torrent can come out other and other thoughts form the human torrent. Does God foresee those? But isn't God free on each moment to decide according to a new circumstance? This is the unfathomable mystery of God.

asked him for telling what he should do; and to pray for the people fallen under the anger mentioned before.

It is appropriate to your all-holiness to suffer more as much as you can for them who are in trouble. This is a duty of the father and of the spiritual teacher. This is for the good shepherd takes care of his sheep and he watches them; so, you must teach the people to bring their part to the ask and to the prayer done for them. This is for so become possible the great things, according to the commandment of the Lord (Mt. 17: 20; Jn. 14: 20).

845. (V. 836). Question: A loving-of Christ layman asked the same Oldman: Will it be good if I tell to mister bishop everything I thing as useful to him?

Answer: This is a right thing and appropriate to that love according to God. You only guard your heart clean in front of God and that won't hurt you. And having a clean heart means not to tell anything about somebody for revenge, but only to do him good. Do not reckon this as a gossip. This is for everything done for correction isn't a gossip. This is for out of gossip doesn't come anything good. But in this case one must help the good. And that's why one must not use the gossip.

846. (This is not given in the Manuscript Paris, Greek, no. 873). Question: What is the doubt of the heart (Mt. 14: 31 and 28: 17) and what does it mean being doubtful (Jas. 1: 8 and 4: 8)?

Answer: The doubt of the heart consists of asking yourself, or of having always within your soul the question: "Has God mercy on me, or not?". If you think that not, that is faithlessness. If you do not believe that God has more mercy on you than you can understand, why do you continue praying[1244]? And being doubtful means not to surrender yourself totally to death in exchange for the Kingdom of Heavens, but to take care more of things for the body.

[1244] Only if you do not doubt the help from God, you will be able to pray with the whole your trust. But you must pray, for only form God comes the help.

847. (This is not given in the Manuscript Paris, Greek, no. 873). Question: What does it mean the word: "It cannot be hidden a city place on the top of a mountain" (Mt. 5: 14)?

Answer: the city is the soul, and the mountain is the peak of the virtues which they who have climbed it on "shine like some candlesticks of light within world, having word of life that will be their glory on the day of Christ" (Phil. 2: 15-16).

848. (This is not given in the Manuscript Paris, Greek, no. 873). Question: What does it mean the word: Always rejoice; pray ceaselessly, give thanks in everything" (Tim. 5: 16-18)?

Answer: In these three things it is comprised the whole our salvation. Always rejoicing it is a guarantee for the righteousness; this is because somebody won't be able to rejoice himself if he doesn't live according to the righteousness[1245]. The ceaseless prayer impedes us from doing anything evil. Finally, giving thanks in ell the things it is an obvious proof for the love for Christ. And if we keep the first two commandments, we will give thanks to God.

We haven't translated the letters 849-850 from the French translation, because they are not given except in that translation, and they are not given in the Greek manuscripts and because they contain some unclarities.

[1245] The righteousness is, in the biblical language, the totality of the virtues.